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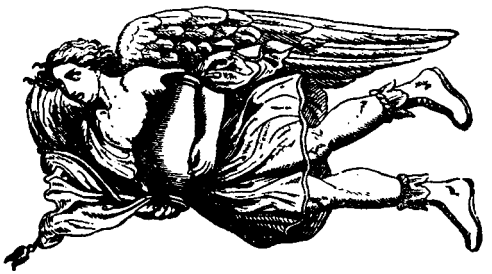

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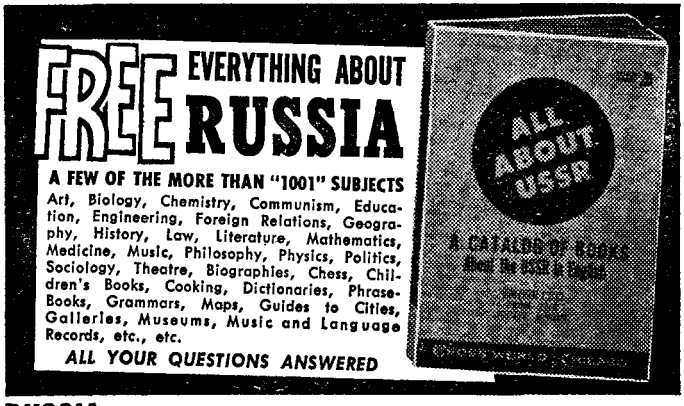
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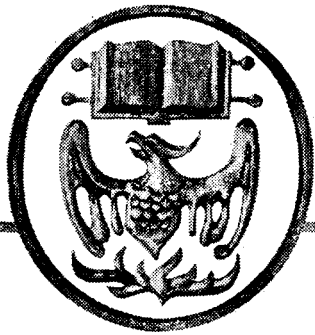

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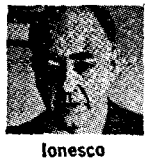
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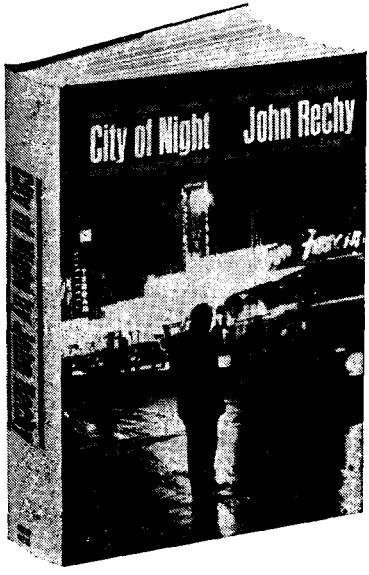

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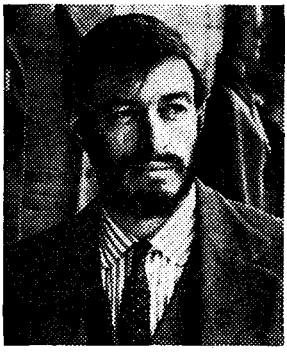
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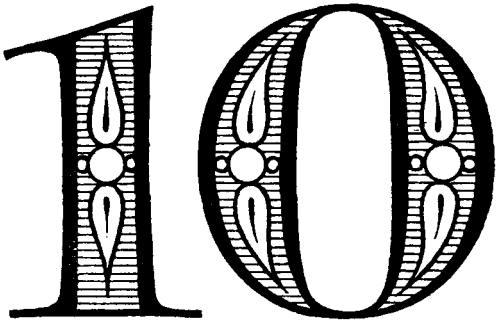

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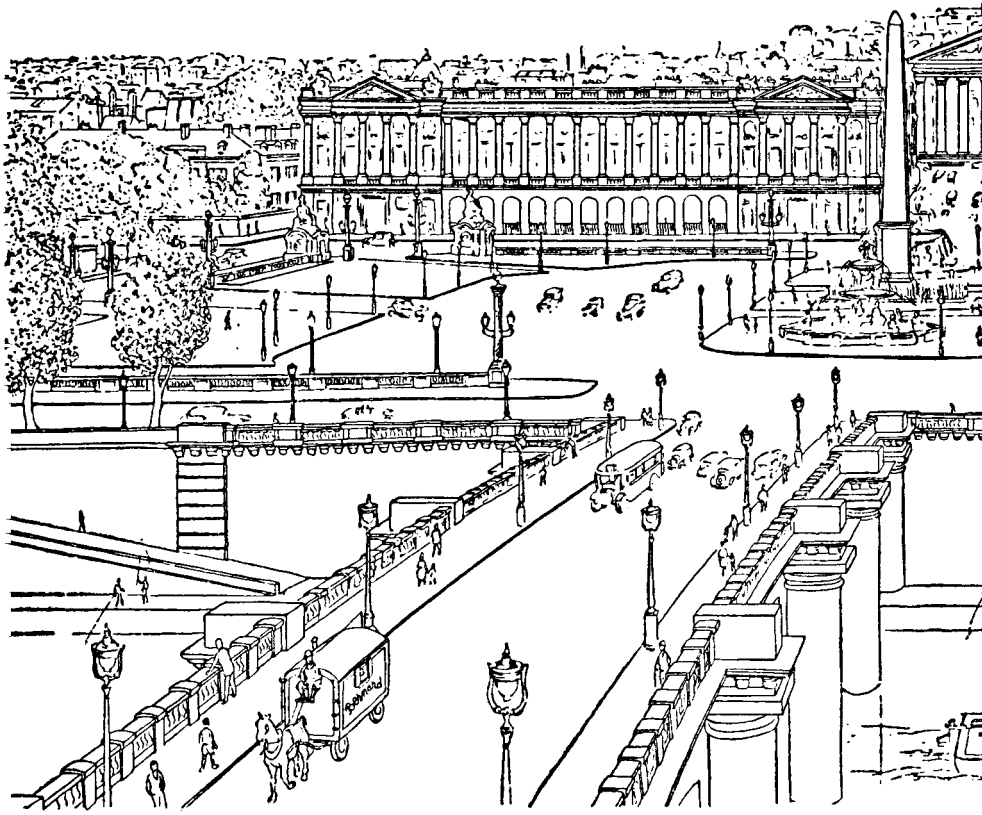

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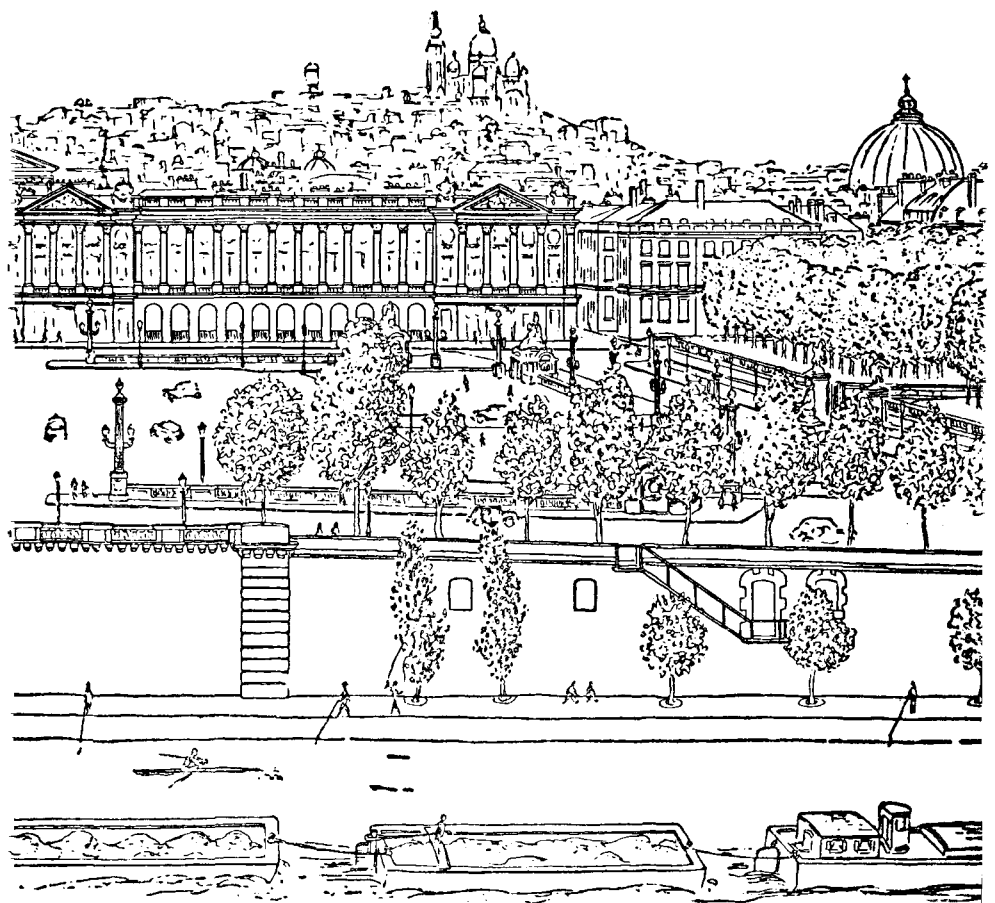

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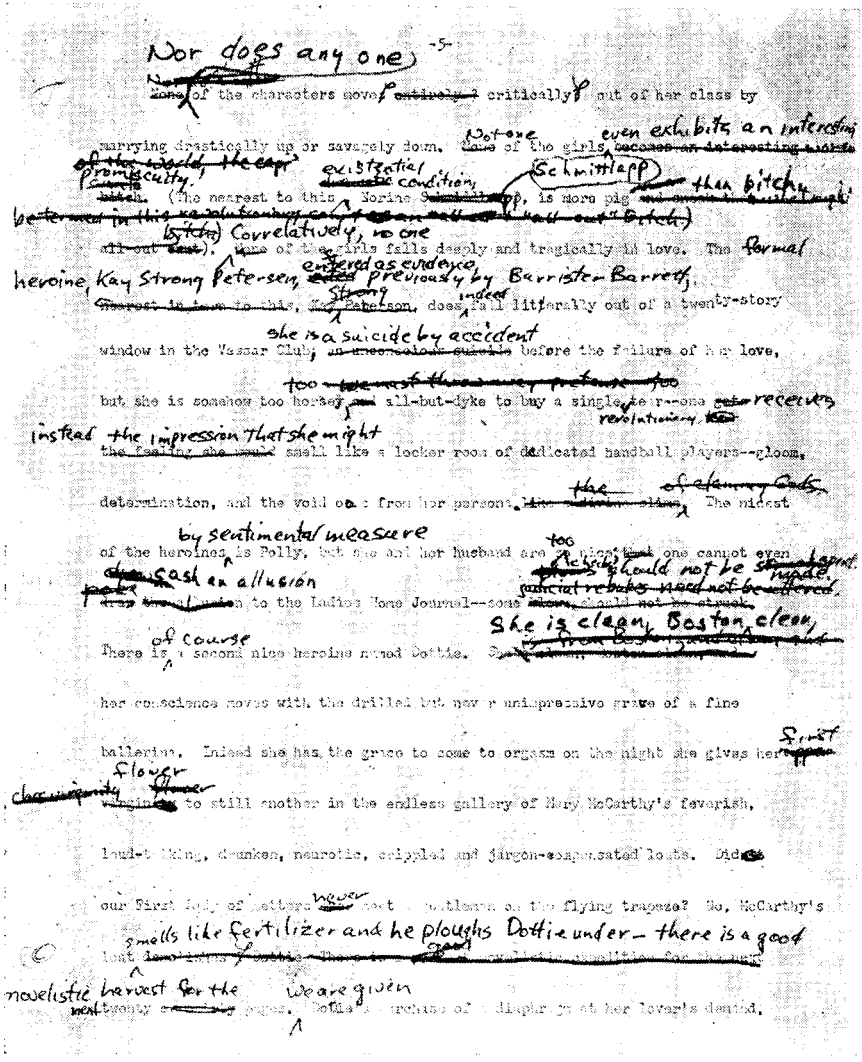
the art of fiction XXXII



a manuscript page by Norman Mailer

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NORMAN MAILER an interview

The interview took place on the afternoon of Saturday, July 6, 1963. The setting was Norman Mailer's Brooklyn Heights apartment, whose living room commands a panoramic view of lower Manhattan, the East River, and the New York harbor. The living room is fitted out with certain nautical or maritime furnishings and decorations, and Mailer, his curls unshorn, seemed at odd moments during the afternoon the novelist-as-ship-captain, though less Ahab than Captain Vere, and less both than Captain Shotover in ripe middle-age. Mailer had recently stopped smoking, and the absence of nicotine had caused him to put on weight, which he carries gracefully and with vigor; the new amplitude of flesh seems to have influenced his spirit in the direction of benignity.

Shortly after the interviewer arrived, Mailer excused himself for a few moments. He wanted to change, he said, into his writer's costume. He emerged wearing faded dungarees and an open-necked sport shirt. His sharp blue eyes sparkled as he suggested that the interviewer keep this fashion note in mind. Lunch was then prepared and served by Mailer in what must be called lordly fashion. In general, he conducts himself without affectation as a kind of secular prince. The interviewer was repeatedly struck during the course of a long afternoon's work by Mailer's manners, which were exquisite. The role of novelist-being-interviewed suits him very well.

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INTERVIEWER

Do you need any particular environment in which to write?

MAILER

I like a room with a view, preferably a long view. I dislike looking out on gardens. I prefer looking at the sea, or ships, or anything which has a vista to it. Oddly enough, I've never worked in the mountains.

INTERVIEWER

Do you need seclusion?

MAILOR

I don't know if I need seclusion, but I do like to be alone in a room.

INTERVIEWER

When did you first think of becoming a writer?

MAILER

That's hard to answer. I did a lot of writing when I was young.

INTERVIEWER

How young?

MAILER

Seven.

INTERVIEWER

A real novel?

MAILER

Well, it was a science fiction novel about people on Earth taking a rocket ship to Mars. The hero had a name which sounded like Buck Rogers. His assistant was called Dr. Hoor.

INTERVIEWER

Doctor ...?

MAILER

Dr. Hoor. WHORE, pronounced H-O-O-R. That's the way we used to pronounce whore in Brooklyn. He was patterned directly after Dr. Huer in Buck Rogers who was then appearing on radio. This novel filled two and a half paper notebooks. You know the type, about 7 × 10. They had soft shiny blue covers and they were, oh, only ten cents in those days, or a nickel. They ran to perhaps 100 pages each, and I used to write on both sides. My writing was

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remarkable for the way I hyphenated words. I loved hyphenating, so I would hyphenate "the" and make it th-e if it came at the end of the line. Or "they" would become the-y. Then I didn't write again for a long time. I didn't even try out for the high school literary magazine. I had friends who wrote short stories, and their short stories were far better than the ones I would write for assignments in high school English and I felt no desire to write. When I got to college I started again. The jump from Boys' High School in Brooklyn to Harvard came as a shock. I started reading some decent novels for the first time.

INTERVIEWER

You mentioned in *Advertisements For Myself* that reading *Studs Lonigan* made you want to be a writer.

MAILER

Yes. It was the best single literary experience I had had because the background of *Studs* was similar to mine. I grew up in Brooklyn, not Chicago, but the atmosphere had the same flatness of affect. Until then I had never considered my life or the life of the people around me as even remotely worthy of—well, I didn't believe they could be treated as subjects for fiction. It had never occurred to me. Suddenly I realized you could write about your own life.

INTERVIEWER

When did you feel that you were started as a writer?

MAILER

When I first began to write again at Harvard. I wasn't very good. I was doing short stories all the time, but I wasn't good. If there were fifty people in the class, let's say I was somewhere in the top ten. My teachers thought I was fair, but I don't believe they ever thought for a moment that I was really talented. Then in the middle of my sophomore year I started getting better. I got on the *Harvard Advocate*, and that gave me confidence, and about this time I did a couple of fairly good short stories for English A-1, one of which won *Story Magazine's* college contest for that year. I must say that Robert Gorham Davis, who was my in-

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structor then, picked the story to submit for the contest and was confident it would win.

INTERVIEWER

Was that the story about Al Groot?

MAILER

Yes. And when I found out it had won—which was at the beginning of the summer after my sophomore year (1941)—well, that fortified me, and I sat down and wrote a novel. It was a very bad novel. I wrote it in two months. It was called *No Percentage*. It was just terrible. But I never questioned any longer whether I was *started* as a writer.

INTERVIEWER

What do you think were some of the early influences in your life? What reading, as a boy, do you recall as important?

MAILER

The Amateur Gentleman and *The Broad Highway* were glorious works. So was *Captain Blood*. I think I read every one of Farnol's books and there must be twenty of them. And every one of Sabatini's.

INTERVIEWER

Did you ever read any of them again?

MAILER

No, now I have no real idea of their merit. But I never enjoyed a novel more than *Captain Blood*. Nor a movie. Do you remember Errol Flynn as Captain Blood? Some years ago I was asked by a magazine what were the ten most important books in my development. The book I listed first was *Captain Blood*. Then came *Das Kapital*. Then *The Amateur Gentleman*.

INTERVIEWER

You wouldn't say that *Das Kapital* was boyhood reading?

MAILER

Oh, no, I read that many years later. But it had its mild influence.

INTERVIEWER

It's been said often that novelists are largely nostalgic for their boyhood, and in fact most novelists draw on their youthful experiences a great deal. In your novels, however, the

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evocation of scenes from boyhood is rare or almost absent.

MAILER

It's difficult to write about childhood. I never felt I understood it in any novel way. I never felt other authors did either. Not particularly. I think the portrait of childhood which is given by most writers is rarely true to anything more than the logic of their novel. Childhood is so protean.

INTERVIEWER

What about Twain, or Hemingway—who drew on their boyhoods successfully?

MAILER

I must admit they created some of the psychological reality of my own childhood. I wanted, for instance, to be like Tom Sawyer.

INTERVIEWER

Not Huck Finn?

MAILER

The magic of Huck Finn seems to have passed me by, I don't know quite why. *Tom Sawyer* was the book of Twain's I always preferred. I remember when I got to college I was startled to find that *Huckleberry Finn* was the classic. Of course I haven't looked at either novel in thirty years.

INTERVIEWER

Can you say something about your methods of working?

MAILER

They vary with each book. I wrote *The Naked and the Dead* on the typewriter. I used to write four days a week: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

INTERVIEWER

Definite hours?

MAILER

Yes, very definite hours. I'd get up about 8.00 or 8.30 and I'd be at work by 10.00. And I'd work till 12.30; then I'd have lunch. I'd get back to work about 2.30 or 3.00, and work for another two hours. In the afternoon I usually needed a can of beer to prime me. But I'd write for five hours a day. And I wrote a great deal. The average I tried to keep was seven typewritten pages a day, twenty-eight pages

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a week. The first draft took seven months, the second draft which really was only half a draft took four months. The part about the platoon went well from the beginning, but the Lieutenant and the General in the first draft were stock characters. If it had been published at that point the book would have been considered an interesting war novel with some good scenes, no more. The second draft was the bonus. Cummings and Hearn were done in the second draft. If you look at the book you can see that the style shifts, that the parts about Cummings and Hearn are written in a somewhat more developed vein. Less forceful but more articulated. And you can see something of the turn my later writing would take in the scenes between Cummings and Hearn.

INTERVIEWER

What methods did you pursue in your next books?

MAILER

Well, with *Barbary Shore*, I began to run into trouble. I started it in Paris about six months after I finished *The Naked and the Dead*, and did about fifty pages. It was then called *Mrs Guinevere* and was influenced by Sally Bowles in Isherwoods' *Berlin Stories*. *Mrs Guinevere* never went anywhere. It stopped, just ground down after those first fifty pages. My novelistic tanks ran out of gas. I dropped it completely, thought I'd never pick it up again, and started to work on another novel. Did all the research, went to Indiana to do research.

INTERVIEWER

On what?

MAILER

On a labor novel. There was a union in Evansville with which I had connections. So I stayed for a few days in Indiana, and then went to Jamaica, Vermont, to write the novel. I spent four to six weeks getting ready to begin. I made a great push on the beginning, worked for two weeks, and quit cold. I didn't have the book. I didn't know a damned thing about labor unions. In desperation (I was full of second novel panic) I picked up *Mrs Guinevere* and looked at it. And found something there I could go on with. So I

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worked on it all through the spring of 1949, and then I moved out to Hollywood for the summer. I finished the second half in Hollywood. *Barbary Shore* is really a Hollywood novel. I think it reflected the impact of Hollywood on me in some subterranean fashion. Certainly the first draft is the wildest draft of the three; it's almost insane, and the most indigestible portions were written in the first couple of months I was in Hollywood. I never knew where the book was going, I had no idea where it was going to move from day to day. I'd wake up and push the typewriter in great dread, in literal terror, wondering when this curious and doubtful inspiration was going to stop. It never quite did. It ground along at the rate of three pages, three difficult pages a day. But I'd get it out. I got a first draft done, and was quite unhappy with it; it was a very bad book at that point. When I rewrote it later, in Provincetown, a summer later, again it went at the rate of three pages a day. This revision was different from the first draft, and I think much better. But working on *Barbary Shore* I always felt as if I were not writing the book myself, but rather as if I were serving as a subject for some intelligence which had decided to use me to write the book. It had nothing to do with whether the work was good or bad. It just had to do with the fact that I had absolutely no conscious control of it; if I hadn't heard about the unconscious I would have had to postulate one to explain this phenomenon. For the first time I became powerfully aware of the fact that I had an unconscious which seemed to have little to do with me.

INTERVIEWER

What about *The Deer Park?*

MAILER

For *The Deer Park* I didn't have much of a method. It was agony; it was far and away the most difficult of my three novels to write. The first and second drafts were written with the idea that they were only the first part of an eight-part novel. I think I used that enormous scheme as a pretext to get into the work. Apparently I just couldn't sit down and write a nice modest Hollywood novel. I had to have some-

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thing grandiose, in conception, anyway. I started *The Deer Park* with "The Man Who Studied Yoga". That was supposed to be a prologue to all eight novels. It went along nicely and was done in a few weeks. And then I got into *The Deer Park*, and I forget what my methods were exactly; I think they varied. In the revisions of *Barbary Shore* I had started working in longhand; as soon as I found myself blocked on the typewriter I'd shift to longhand. By the time I got to *The Deer Park* I was writing in longhand all the time. I'd write in longhand in the morning, and type up what I'd written in the afternoon. I was averaging about four-five pages a day, I think, three days a week; about fifteen pages a week. But I found it an unendurable book to write because I'd finish each day in the most profound depression; as I found out later it was even a physical depression. I was gutting my liver.

INTERVIEWER

It wasn't alcohol?

MAILER

No, I wasn't much of a drinker in those days. The liver, you see, is not unlike a car battery, and I was draining mine. I was writing with such anxiety and such fear and such distaste, and such gloom and such dissatisfaction that ...

INTERVIEWER

Dissatisfaction with what?

MAILER

Oh, everything. My work, my life, myself. The early draft of *The Deer Park* was terrible. It had a few good things in it, but it was slow to emerge, it took years, and was stubborn. It still emerges. I mean, I could sit down today and rewrite *The Deer Park*. Of course, what was happening was that this work, such as it was, was continuing to move in a direction which was completely against the grain of my intellect—insofar as my intellect was developed, and had standards and tastes and attitudes toward the novel. I was working toward a novel utterly outrageous to my notion of things.

INTERVIEWER

Say it again?

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MAILER

Well, I was a socialist after all, and I believed in large literary works which were filled with characters, and were programmatic, and had large theses, and were developed, let's say, like the Tolstoyan novel. It's as if, all proportion naturally being kept, as if Tolstoy had sat down with the intention of writing *Anna Karenina* and instead came out with *Crime and Punishment*. Obviously, it would have been intolerable for him, and he would have disliked *Crime and Punishment* very much. That was what was going on with me at a much lower level.

INTERVIEWER

How does the idea of a novel come to you?

MAILER

I don't know that it comes. A more appropriate image for me might be that I start with the idea of constructing a treehouse and end with a skyscraper made of wood.

INTERVIEWER

Well, how did the idea of *The Naked and the Dead* come to you?

MAILER

I wanted to write a short novel about a long patrol. All during the war I kept thinking about this patrol. I even had the idea before I went overseas. Probably it was stimulated by a few war books I had read: John Hersey's *Into the Valley*, Harry Brown's *A Walk in the Sun*, and a couple of others I no longer remember. Out of these books came the idea to do a novel about a long patrol. And I began to create my characters. All the while I was overseas a part of me was working on this long patrol. I even ended up in a reconnaisance outfit which I had asked to get into. A reconnaissance outfit, after all, tends to take long patrols. Art kept traducing life. At any rate, when I started writing *The Naked and the Dead* I thought it might be a good idea to have a preliminary chapter or two in which to give the reader a chance to meet my characters before they went on patrol. But the next six months and the first 500 pages went into that, and I remember in the early days I was annoyed at how long it was taking me to get to the patrol.

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INTERVIEWER

Do you keep notes, or a journal, or diaries, or write scenarios? What's your preparatory material?

MAILER

That also varies with each of the books. For *The Naked and the Dead* I had a file full of notes, and a long dossier on each man. Many of these details never got into the novel, but the added knowledge made me feel more comfortable with each character. Indeed I even had charts to show which characters had not yet had scenes with other characters. For a book which seems spontaneous on its surface, *The Naked and the Dead* was written mechanically. I studied engineering at Harvard, and I suppose it was the book of a young engineer. The structure is sturdy, but there's no fine filigree to the joints. Just spot welding and riveting. And the working plan was very simple. I devised some preliminary actions for the platoon in order to give the reader an opportunity to get to know the men, but this beginning, as I said, took over two-thirds of the book. The patrol itself is also simple, but I did give more thought to working it out ahead of time.

INTERVIEWER

People have commented on the pleasure you seem to take in the military detail of *The Naked and the Dead.*

MAILER

Compared to someone like James Jones, I'm an amateur at military detail. But at that time I did like all those details. I even used to enjoy patrols, or at least I did when I wasn't sick with jungle rot and viruses or atabrine poisoning. I was one of the few men in the platoon who could read a map. I was the only enlisted man I know who really cared about reading a map and once I gave myself away. We used to have classes after a campaign was over; we'd come back to garrison—one of those tent cities out in a rice paddy—and they would teach us all over again how to read maps and read compasses, or they would drill us on the nomenclature of the machine gun for the eighth time. One day very bored, I was daydreaming, and the instructor pointed to a part of the map and said, "Mailer, what are these coordinates?" If I

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had had a moment to think I would never have answered, it was bad form to be bright in my outfit, but I didn't think: he caught me in a daze, and I looked up and said, "320.017 dash 146.814" and everyone's mouth dropped. It was the first time anybody ever answered such a question thus briskly in the history of infantry map reading. At any rate, that was the fun for me, the part about the patrol. I suppose it had something to do with *Captain Blood* and *The Amateur Gentleman*...

INTERVIEWER

How much of a plan did you have for *Barbary Shore?*

MAILER

None. As I indicated earlier, *Barbary Shore* just birthed itself slowly. The book came out sentence by sentence. I literally never knew where the next day's work was coming from.

INTERVIEWER

You don't mention (in your description of writing *Barbary Shore*) any relationship to politics. Wasn't your *engagement* at the time a considerable part of the plan?

MAILER

I think it was the unspoken drama in the working-up of the book. I started *Barbary Shore* as some sort of fellow-traveler, and finished with a political position which was a far-flung mutation of Trotskyism. And the drafts of the book reflected these ideological changes so drastically that the last draft of *Barbary Shore* is a different novel altogether and has almost nothing in common with the first draft but the names.

INTERVIEWER

Did Jean Malaquais (to whom the book is dedicated) have much to do with this?

MAILER

Yes. He had an enormous influence on me. He's the only man I know who can combine a powerfully dogmatic mind with the keenest sense of nuance, and he has a formidable culture which seems to live in his veins and capillaries. Since he also had a most detailed vision of the Russian Revolution —he was steeped in it the way certain American families are

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imbued with the records of their clan—I spent a year living more closely in the history of Russia from 1917 to 1937 than in the events of my own life. I doubt if I would even have gone back to rewrite *Barbary Shore* if I didn't know Malaquais. Certainly I could never have conceived McLeod. Malaquais, of course, bears no superficial resemblance whatsoever to McLeod—indeed Malaquais was never even a communist, he started as an anti-Stalinist, but he had a quality when I first met him which was pure Old Bolshevik. One knew that if he had been born in Russia, a contemporary of Lenin's, he would have been one of the leaders of the Revolution and would doubtless have been executed in the trials. So his personality—as it filtered through the contradictory themes of my unconscious—inhabits *Barbary Shore*.

INTERVIEWER

Would you care to discuss what you mean by the "contradictory themes" of your unconscious? Is that related to what you said a little while ago about becoming aware of your unconscious while writing *Barbary Shore*?

MAILER

Barbary Shore was built on the division which existed then in my mind. My conscious intelligence, as I've indicated, became obsessed by the Russian Revolution. But my unconscious was much more interested in other matters: murder, suicide, orgy, psychosis, all the themes I discuss in *Advertisements*. Since the gulf between these conscious and unconscious themes was vast and quite resistant to any quick literary coupling, the tension to get a bridge across resulted in the peculiar feverish hothouse atmosphere of the book. My unconscious felt one kind of dread, my conscious mind another, and *Barbary Shore* lives somewhere between. That's why its focus is so unearthly. And of course this difficulty kept haunting me from then on in all the work I did afterward. But it was a book written without any plan.

INTERVIEWER

And *The Deer Park*?

MAILER

That was different. There I had an idea of what I was

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going to do. I knew it was going to be a story about a most unhappy love. The problem was getting to the affair: I could hardly wait to reach it, especially because the early parts of the novel were so difficult to write. It is truly difficult to trap Hollywood in a novel. Only in the last draft did I finally get the setting the way I wanted it. I think now the setting is probably the best part. In fact I would judge that the first fifty pages of *The Deer Park* are the best writing I have ever done in fiction. But they were the hardest fifty pages of the book to write and certainly took the longest time.

INTERVIEWER

Do you have any superstitions about your methods of work?

MAILER

I wouldn't call them superstitions exactly. I just think it's bad to talk about one's present work, for it spoils something at the root of the creative act. It discharges the tension.

INTERVIEWER

What writers have you learned the most from, technically?

MAILER

E. M. Forster, I suppose. I wouldn't say he is necessarily one of the novelists I admire most. But I have learned a lot from him. You remember in *The Longest Journey* somewhere about the fourth chapter, you turn the page and read, "Gerald was killed that day. He was beaten to death in a football game." It was quite extraordinary. Gerald had been very important through the beginning of the book. But now that he was suddenly and abruptly dead, everyone else's character began to shift. It taught me that personality was more fluid, more dramatic and startling, more inexact than I had thought. I was brought up on the idea that when you wrote a novel you tried to build a character who could be handled and walked around like a piece of sculpture. Suddenly character seemed related more closely to the paintings of the new realists. For instance I saw one recently which had a painted girl reclining on a painted bed, and there was a television set next to her in the canvas, a real one which you could turn on. Turning on the literal factual set changes the girl and the

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painting both. Well, Forster gives you something of that sensation in his novels. I played with such a concept a great deal in *Barbary Shore* and I began to play with it in *The Deer Park* in an altogether different way. I suppose the concept was parallel to the 'Alexandria Quartet' in its preoccupations. When you tell the same story through the eyes of different characters, you have not only a different novel but a different reality. I think I could sit down today and write *The Deer Park* through Charles Francis Eitel's eyes, and if I changed the names and the place, no one might know the new book had anything to do with *The Deer Park*. I suppose what I realized, after reading Forster, was that a novel written in the third person was now impossible for me for many years.

INTERVIEWER

Forster has never written a novel in the first person.

MAILER

I know he hasn't, but in some funny way Forster gave my notion of personality a sufficient shock that I could not manage to write in the third person. Forster after all had a developed view of the world I did not. I think I must have felt at that time as if I would never be able to write in the third person until I developed a coherent view of life. I don't know that I've been able to altogether.

INTERVIEWER

You know, Thackeray says at one point, that the novelist knows everything. He is like God, and this may be why he could write in the third person.

MAILER

God can write in the third person only so long as He understands His world. But if the world becomes contradictory or incomprehensible to Him, then God begins to grow concerned with his own nature. It's either that, or borrow notions from other Gods.

INTERVIEWER

Have you ever cribbed anything from other writers?

MAILER

Oh, you know, I have such a—what shall I say?—such a stuffy view of myself that I could never *conceive* of cribbing.

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But I have been *influenced* by—well, Farrell to begin with. Dos Passos, Steinbeck (I am trying to do it chronologically), Hemingway, and later Fitzgerald—much, much later. And Thomas Wolfe of course.

INTERVIEWER

But back to cribbing. Shakespeare cribs, for example. He never invented a plot.

MAILER

No, but my plots are always rudimentary. Whatever I've accomplished certainly does not depend on my virtuosity with plot. Generally I don't even have a plot. What happens is that my characters engage in an action, and out of that action little bits of plot sometimes adhere to the narrative. I never have to worry about lifting a plot, because I don't conceive of a book that way.

INTERVIEWER

In connexion with plot, when did the idea of using a hornet's nest to thwart the climbers in *The Naked and the Dead* come to you?

MAILER

That idea was there before I wrote the first sentence of the book. Actually that incident happened to my reconnaissance platoon on the most ambitious patrol I ever took with them. They sent out thirty of us to locate and destroy one hundred Japanese marines who had gotten behind our lines. Well we never found the marines, but we did get stuck climbing one hell of an enormous hill with a mean slimy trail, and when we were almost up to the ridge, somebody kicked over a hornet's nest. Half the platoon went tearing up the hill, and the machine gun squad went flying down to the valley. We never did find each other again that day. We just slunk back to our bivouac.

INTERVIEWER

Apart from the fact that it happened, do you think in fact it was a satisfactory device? It seems to have bothered some people.

MAILER

I think I'd do it the same way again. War is disproportions, and the hornet's nest seemed a perfect disproportion to me.

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We were ready to lose our lives but we weren't up to getting stung by a hornet.

INTERVIEWER

Would you say something about style, prose style, in relation to the novel?

MAILER

A really good style comes only when a man has become as good as he can be. Style is character. A good style cannot come from a bad undisciplined character. Now a man may be evil, but I believe that people can be evil in their essential natures and still have good characters. Good in the sense of being well-tuned. They can have characters which are flexible, supple, adaptable, principled in relation to their own good or their own evil—even an evil man can have principles—he can be true to his own evil, which is not always so easy, either. I think good style is a matter of rendering out of oneself all the cupidities, all the cripplings, all the velleities. And then I think one has to develop one's physical grace. Writers who are possessed of some physical grace may tend to write better than writers who are physically clumsy. It's my impression this is so.

INTERVIEWER

Well, how would you describe your own style? I ask this question because certain critics have pointed to deficiencies in it, or what they think of as deficiencies. Didn't Diana Trilling, for instance, criticize certain flatnesses in your style?

MAILER

I think that flatness comes out of certain flatnesses in me. And in trying to overcome that flatness I may push too hard in the other direction. Alfred Kazin once said something very funny about the way I write: "Mailer is as fond of his style as an Italian tenor is of his vocal cords."

INTERVIEWER

Have you ever written to merely improve your writing, practiced your writing as an athlete would work out?

MAILER

No. I don't think it's a proper activity. That's too much like doing a setting-up exercise; any workout which does

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not involve a certain minimum of danger or responsibility does not improve the body—it just wears it out.

INTERVIEWER

In writing your novels, has any particular formal problem given you trouble—let's say a problem of joining two parts of a narrative together, getting people from point A to point B.

MAILER

You mean like getting them out of a room? I think formal problems exist in inverse proportion to one's honesty. You get to the problem of getting someone out of the room when there's something false about the scene.

INTERVIEWER

Do you do any research or special reading to prepare for writing a novel, or while you're writing a novel?

MAILER

Occasionally I have to look something up. But I'm always unhappy about that and mistrust the writing which comes out of it. I feel in a way that one's ignorance is part of one's creation, too. I don't know quite how to put it, but for instance if I, as a Jew, am writing about other Jews, and if my knowledge of Jewish culture is exceptionally spotty, as indeed it is, I am not so sure that that isn't an advantage in creating a modern American Jew. Because *his* knowledge of Jewish culture is also extremely spotty, and the way in which his personality is composed may be more in accordance with my ignorance than with a cultivated Jew's immersion in the culture. So in certain limited ways one's ignorance can help to buttress the validity of a novel.

INTERVIEWER

Have you ever written about a situation of which you have had no personal experience or knowledge?

MAILER

I don't know. Let's see... *Barbary Shore*, for example, is the most imaginative of my novels. But I did live in a rooming house for a short period while I was writing *The Naked and the Dead*. I certainly didn't live in it the way Lovett lived in it. I never met an F.B.I. agent, at least I had no sense of

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having met one at the time I was writing *Barbary Shore*. I am sure I have met a great many since. They didn't necessarily introduce themselves to me. I had never met an Old Bolshevik, either, except for Malaquais although ironically, writing about F.B.I. agents and Old Bolsheviks in *Barbary Shore*, the greatest single difficulty with the book was that my common sense thought it was impossible to have all these agents and impossible heroes congregating in a rooming house in Brooklyn Heights. Yet a couple of years later I was working in a studio on Fulton Street at the end of Brooklyn Heights, a studio I have had for some years. It was a fine old studio building and they're tearing it down now to make room for a twenty-story building which will look like a Kleenex box. At any rate, on the floor below me, worked one Colonel Rudolph Abel who was the most important spy for the Russians in this country for a period of about eight or ten years, and I am sure we used to be in the elevator together many times. I think he literally had the room beneath me. I have always been overcome with that. It made me decide there's no clear boundary between experience and imagination. Who knows what glimpses of reality we pick up unconsciously, telepathically.

INTERVIEWER

To what extent are your characters modelled on real people?

MAILER

I think half of them might have a point of departure from somebody real. Up to now I've not liked writing about people who are close to me, because they're too difficult to do. Their private reality obviously interferes with the reality one is trying to create. They become alive not as creatures in your imagination but as actors in your life. And so they seem real while you work but you're not working *their* reality into your book. For example it's not a good idea to try to put your wife into a novel. Not your latest wife, anyway. In practice I prefer to draw a character from someone I hardly know. Hollingsworth came from someone I met in Paris, a vapid young American who inveigled me to have a cup of coffee with him in a cafe, and asked a lot of dull

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questions. *The Naked and the Dead* had just come out and I think he was impressed with that. Yet, there was something sinister about him. I had met him at the Sorbonne a week or two before and I saw him again just for this afternoon for no more than an hour, but he stayed in my memory and became Leroy Hollingsworth in *Barbary Shore*.

INTERVIEWER

How do you name your characters?

MAILER

I try to let the name emerge, because I've found out that the names of my characters usually have roots in the book. I try to avoid quick or cheap symbolisms. Athough, I contradict myself, for much is made in *The Deer Park* of the way the name Eitel is pronounced Eye-tell.

INTERVIEWER

I-tell?

MAILER

Eye-tell. But I became aware of that, believe it or not, only when the book was half done. The original title of *The Deer Park* was *The Idol and the Octopus*. The book was going to be about Charles Francis Eitel, the Director, and Herman Teppis, the Producer, and the underlying theme was the war between those who wished to make an idol out of art, the artists, and the patron who sued art for power, the octopus.

INTERVIEWER

You also called him "Idell".

MAILER

Frankie Idell in "The Man Who Studied Yoga", yes, but there again, I was obviously getting ready for some—shall we say, hankypanky, in the eight novels.

INTERVIEWER

Can you describe how you turn a real person into a fictional one?

MAILER

I try to put the model in situations which have very little to do with his real situations in life. Very quickly the model disappears. His private reality can't hold up. For instance,

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I might take somebody who is a professional football player, a man let's say whom I know slightly, and make him a movie star. In a transposition of this sort, everything which relates particularly to the professional football player quickly disappears, and what is left, curiously, is what is *exportable* in his character. But this process while interesting in the early stages is not as exciting as the more creative act of allowing your characters to grow once they're separated from the model. It's when they become almost as complex as one's own personality that the fine excitement begins. Because then they are not really characters any longer—they're beings, which is a distinction I like to make. A character is someone you can grasp as a whole, you can have a clear idea of him, but a being is someone whose nature keeps shifting. Like a character of Forster's. In *The Deer Park* Lulu Myers is a being rather than a character. If you study her closely you will see that she is a different person in every scene. Just a little different. I don't know whether initially I did this by accident or purposefully, but at a certain point I made the conscious decision *not* to try to straighten her out, she seemed right in her change-ableness.

INTERVIEWER

Is Marion Faye a character or a...

MAILER

No, he's a being. Everybody in *The Deer Park* is a being except the minor characters like Herman Teppis.

INTERVIEWER

Do specific characters reappear in different guises as the novels appear?

MAILER

To a mild degree. Actually it's easier for me to create a new character than to drag along one of the old ones. No, I think it's more that certain themes reappear in my novels, but I'd rather not get into this just yet.

INTERVIEWER

How did Marion Faye emerge?

MAILER

The book needed something which wasn't in the first draft, some sort of evil genius. One felt a dark pressure there in the

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inner horizon of the book. But even as I say this I know it's not true to the grain on my writing experience. I violate that experience by talking in these terms. I am not sure it's possible to describe the experience of novel-writing authentically. It may be that it is not an experience.

INTERVIEWER

What is it, then?

MAILER

It may be more like a relation, if you will—a continuing relation between a man and his wife. You can't necessarily speak of that as an experience because it may consist of several experiences which are braided together; or it may consist of many experiences which are all more or less similar, or indeed it may consist of two kinds of experiences which are antagonistic to one another. Throughout all of this I've spoken of characters *emerging*. Quite often they don't emerge; they fail to emerge. And what one's left with is the dull compromise which derives from two kinds of experiences warring with one another within oneself. A character who should have been brilliant is dull. Or even if a character does prove to be first-rate, it's possible you should have done twice as much with him, three times as much.

INTERVIEWER

You speak of character as emerging, and I gather by that that you mean emerging from yourself and emerging from your idea?

MAILER

They are also emerging from the book. A book takes on its own life in the writing. It has its laws, it becomes a creature to you after a while. One feels a bit like a master who's got a fine animal. Very often I'll feel a certain shame for what I've done with a novel. I won't say it's the novel that's bad; I'll say it's I who was bad. Almost as if the novel did not really belong to me, as if it was something raised by me like a child. I know what's potentially beautiful in my novel, you see. Very often after I've done the novel I realize that that beauty which I recognize in it is not going to be recognized by the reader. I didn't succeed in bringing it out.

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It's very odd—it's as though I had let the novel down, owed it a duty which I didn't fulfill.

INTERVIEWER

Would you say that there was any secret or hidden pattern being worked out in your novels?

MAILER

I'd rather leave that to others. If I answer the question badly, nothing is accomplished. If I answer too well, it's going to discourage critics. I can imagine nothing more distressing to a critic than to have a writer see accurately into his own work. But I will say one thing, which is that I have some obsession with how God exists. Is He an essential god or an existential god; is He all-powerful or is He, too, an embattled existential creature who may succeed or fail in His vision? I think this theme may become more apparent as the novels go on.

INTERVIEWER

When did this obsession begin?

MAILER

I think it began to show itself while I was doing the last draft of *The Deer Park*. Then it continued to grow as a private theme during all the years I was smoking marijuana.

INTERVIEWER

You have spoken so often of the existential view. What reading, or individuals brought you to this?

MAILER

The experience came first. One's condition on marijuana is always existential. One can feel the importance of each moment and how it is changing one. One feels one's being, one becomes aware of the enormous apparatus of nothingness —the hum of a hi-fi set, the emptiness of a pointless interruption, one becomes aware of the war between each of us, how the nothingness in each of us seeks to attack the being of others, how our being in turn is attacked by the nothingness in others. I'm not speaking now of violence or the active conflict between one being and another. That still belongs to drama. But the war between being and nothingness is the

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underlying illness of the twentieth century. Boredom slays more of existence than war.

INTERVIEWER

Then you didn't come to existentialism because it was a literary influence?

MAILER

No. I'd hardly read anything by Sartre at this time, and nothing by Heidegger. I've read a bit since, and have to admire their formidable powers, but I suspect they are no closer to the buried continent of existentialism than were medieval cartographers near to a useful map of the world. The new continent which shows on our psychic maps as intimations of eternity is still to be discovered.

INTERVIEWER

What do you feel about the other kinds of writing you have done and are doing. How do they stand in relation to your work as a novelist?

MAILER

The essays?

INTERVIEWER

Yes: journalism, essays.

MAILER

Well, you know, there was a time when I wanted very much to belong to the literary world. I wanted to be respected the way someone like Katherine Anne Porter used to be respected.

INTERVIEWER

How do you think she was respected?

MAILER

The way a cardinal is respected—weak people get to their knees when the cardinal goes by.

INTERVIEWER

As a master of the craft, do you mean?

MAILER

As a master of the craft, yes. Her name is invoked in an argument. "Well, Katherine Anne Porter would not do it *that* way". But by now I'm a bit cynical about craft. I think there's a natural mystique in the novel which is more im-

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portant than craft. One is trying, after all, to capture reality, and that is extraordinarily and exceptionally difficult. I think craft is merely a series of way-stations. I think of craft as being like a St. Bernard dog with that little bottle of brandy under his neck. Whenever you get into *real* trouble the thing that can save you as a novelist is to have enough craft to be able to keep warm long enough to be rescued. Of course this is exactly what keeps good novelists from becoming great novelists. Robert Penn Warren might have written a major novel if he hadn't had just that little extra bit of craft to get him out of all the trouble in *All The King's Men*. If Penn Warren hadn't known anything about Elizabethan literature, the true Elizabethan in him might have emerged. I mean, he might have written a fantastic novel. As it was, he knew enough about craft to...

INTERVIEWER

To use it as an escape hatch?

MAILER

Yes. And his plot degenerated into a slambang of exits and entrances, confrontations, tragedies, quick wits and woe. But he was really forcing an escape from the problem.

INTERVIEWER

Which was?

MAILER

Oh, the terror of confronting a reality which might open into more and more anxiety and so present a deeper and deeper view of the abyss. Craft protects one from facing those endless expanding realities of deterioration and responsibility.

INTERVIEWER

Deterioration in what sense?

MAILER

The terror, let's say, of being reborn as something much less noble or something much more ignoble. I think this sort of terror depresses us profoundly. Which may be why we throw up our enormous evasions—such as craft. Indeed, I think this adoration of craft, this specific respect for craft makes a church of literature for that vast number of writers who are somewhere on the spectrum between mediocrity and

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talent. But I think it's fatal for somebody who has a large ambition and a chance of becoming a great writer. I know for myself, if I am going to make this attempt—that the only way to do it is to keep in shape in a peculiar way.

INTERVIEWER

Can you explain what you mean by that?

MAILER

It's hard to talk about. Harry Greb, for example, was a fighter who used to keep in shape. He was completely a fighter, the way one might wish to be completely a writer. He always did the things which were necessary to him as a fighter. Now, some of these things were extremely irrational, that is, extremely irrational from a prize-fight manager's point of view. That is, before he had a fight he would go to a brothel, and he would have two prostitutes, not one, taking the two of them into the same bed. And this apparently left him feeling like a wild animal. Don't ask me why. Perhaps he picked the two meanest whores in the joint and so absorbed into his system all the small, nasty, concentrated evils which had accumulated from carloads of men. Greb was known as the dirtiest fighter of his time. He didn't have much of a punch but he could spoil other fighters and punish them, he knew more dirty tricks than anyone around. This was one of his training methods and he did it over and over again until he died at a relatively early age of a heart attack, on an operating table. I think he died before he was thirty-eight, or so. They operated on him, and bang, he went. Nothing could be done. But the point I make is that he stayed in training by the way he lived his life. The element which was paramount in it was to keep in shape. If he were drinking, you see, the point was to keep in shape *while* drinking. I'm being a touch imprecise about this...

INTERVIEWER

Well... what?

MAILER

He would not just drink to release his tension. Rather, what went on was that there was tension in him which was insupportable, so he had to drink. But reasoning as a profes-

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sional he felt that if he had to drink, he might as well use that too. In the sense that the actor uses everything which happens to him, so Greb as a fighter used everything which happened to him. As he drank he would notice the way his body moved. One of the best reasons one drinks is to become aware of the way his mind and body move.

INTERVIEWER

Well, how do you keep in shape?

MAILER

Look, before we go on, I want to say a little more about craft. It is a grab-bag of procedures, tricks, love, formal gymnastics, symbolic superstructures, methodology in short. It's the compendium of what you've acquired from others. And since great writers communicate a vision of existence, one can't usually borrow their methods. The method is married to the vision. No, one acquires craft more from good writers and mediocre writers with a flair. Craft after all is what you can take out whole from their work. But keeping in shape is something else. For example, you can do journalism, and it can be terrible for your style. Or it can temper your style... in other words you can become a *better* writer by doing a lot of different kinds of writing. Or you can deteriorate. There's a book came out a few years ago which was a sociological study of some Princeton men—I forget the name of it. One of them said something which I thought was extraordinary. He said he wanted to perform the sexual act under every variety of condition, emotion, and mood available to him. I was struck with this not because I ever wanted necessarily to have that kind of sexual life, but because it seemed to me that was what I was trying to do with my writing. I try to go over my work in every conceivable mood. I edit on a spectrum which runs from the high clear manic impressions of a drunk which has made one electrically alert all the way down to the soberest reaches of depression where I can hardly bear my words. By the time I'm done with writing I care about I usually have worked on it through the full gamut of my consciousness. If you keep yourself in this peculiar kind of shape, the craft will take care

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of itself. Craft is very little finally. But if you're continually worrying about whether you're growing or deteriorating as a man, whether your integrity is turning soft or firming itself, why then it's in that slow war, that slow rearguard battle you fight against diminishing talent that you stay in shape as a writer and have a consciousness. You develop a consciousness as you grow older which enables you to write about anything, in effect, and write about it well. That is, provided you keep your consciousness in shape and don't relax into the flabby styles of thought which surround one everywhere. The moment you borrow other writers' styles of thought, you need craft to shore up the walls. But if what you write is a reflection of your own consciousness, then even journalism can become interesting. One wouldn't want to spend one's life at it and I wouldn't want ever to be caught justifying journalism as a major activity (it's obviously less interesting than to write a novel), but it's better, I think, to see journalism as a venture of one's ability to keep in shape than to see it as an essential betrayal of the chalice of your literary art. Temples are for women.

INTERVIEWER

Temples are for women?

MAILER

Temples are for women.

INTERVIEWER

Well, Faulkner once said that nothing can injure a man's writing if he's a first-rate writer.

MAILER

Faulkner said more asinine things than any other major American writer. I can't remember a single interesting remark Faulkner ever made.

INTERVIEWER

He once called Henry James a "nice old lady".

MAILER

Faulkner had a mean small Southern streak in him, and most of his pronunciamentoes reflect that meanness. He's a great writer, but he's not at all interesting in most of his passing remarks.

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INTERVIEWER

Well, then, what can ruin a first-rate writer?

MAILER

Booze, pot, too much sex, too much failure in one's private life, too much attrition, too much recognition, too little recognition, frustration. Nearly everything in the scheme of things works to dull a first-rate talent. But the worst probably is cowardice—as one gets older, one becomes aware of one's cowardice, the desire to be bold which once was a joy gets heavy with caution and duty. And finally there's apathy. About the time it doesn't seem to be important any more to be a great writer, you know you've slipped far enough to be doing your work now on the comeback trail.

INTERVIEWER

Would you say that is where you are now?

MAILER

Let others say it. I don't know that I choose to. The hardest thing for a writer to decide is whether he's burned out or merely lying fallow. I was ready to think I was burned out before I even started *The Naked and the Dead*.

INTERVIEWER

What kind of an audience do you keep in mind when you write?

MAILER

I suppose it's that audience which has no tradition by which to measure their experience but the intensity and clarity of their inner lives. That's the audience I'd like to be good enough to write for.

INTERVIEWER

Do you feel under any obligation to them?

MAILER

Yes. I have a consciousness now which I think is of use to them. I've got to be able to get it out and do it well, to transmit it in such a way that their experience can rise to a higher level. It's exactly... I mean, one doesn't want one's children to make one's own mistakes. Let them make better mistakes, more exceptional mistakes.

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INTERVIEWER

What projects do you have for the future?

MAILER

I've got a very long novel I want to do. And beyond that I haven't looked. Some time ahead I'd like to be free of responsibilities so I could spend a year just taking on interesting assignments—cover the World Series, go to report a war. I can't do that now. I have a feeling I've got to come to grips with myself, with my talent, with what I've made of it and what I've spoiled of it. I've got to find out whether I really can write a large novel or not.

INTERVIEWER

What have you spoiled?

MAILER

All sorts of potentialities. I've burned them out—squandered them, wasted them. I think everybody does. It's a question of whether I've spoiled more than my share.

INTERVIEWER

You once said that you wished to become consecutively more disruptive, more dangerous, and more powerful, and you felt this sentence was a description of your function as a novelist. I wonder if you still think that?

MAILER

I might take out "disruptive". It's an unhappy word to use. It implies a love of disruption for the sake of disruption. Actually, I have a fondness for order.

INTERVIEWER

Do you enjoy writing, or is such a term irrelevant to your experience?

MAILER

Oh no. No, no. You set me thinking of something Jean Malaquais once said. He always has a terrible time writing. He once complained with great anguish about the unspeakable difficulties he was having with a novel. And I asked him, "Why do you do it?. You can do many other things well. Why do you bother with it?" I really meant this. Because he suffered when writing like no one I know. He looked up in surprise and said, "Oh, but this is the only way one can

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ever find the truth. The only time I know that something is true is at the moment I discover it in the act of writing". I think it's that. I think it's this moment of intellection, this moment of seizure when one knows it's true. One may not have written it well enough for others to know, but you're in love with the truth when you discover it at the point of a pencil. That in and by itself is one of the few rare pleasures in life.

INTERVIEWER

How do you feel when you aren't working?

MAILER

Edgy. I get into trouble. I would say I'm wasting my substance completely when I'm not writing.

INTERVIEWER

And to be writing... to be a writer?

MAILER

Well, at best you affect the consciousness of your time, and so indirectly you affect the history of the time which succeeds you. Of course, you need patience. It takes a long time for sentiments to collect into an action and often they never do. Which is why I was once so ready to conceive of running for Mayor of New York. I wanted to make actions rather than effect sentiments. But I've come to the middle-aged conclusion that I'm probably better as a writer than a man of action. Too bad. Still it's no little matter to be a writer. There's that Godawful Time Magazine world out there, and one can make raids on it. There are palaces, and prisons to attack. One can even succeed now and again in blowing holes in the line of the world's communications. Sometimes I feel as if there's a vast guerrilla war going on for the mind of man, communist against communist, capitalist against capitalist, artist against artist. And the stakes are huge. Will we spoil the best secrets of life or will we help to free a new kind of man? It's intoxicating to think of that. There's something rich waiting if one of us is brave enough and good enough to get there.

—STEVE MARCUS

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A PORTFOLIO OF NEW POETRY

Prefatory Note

Though it is not our right to claim that the poets represented in the following portfolio would have remained in dark unfathomed caves of ocean had it not been for The Paris Review, *surely all are among those writers whom this magazine has helped make known. For this occasion we invited new work from them. All have made substantial contributions to two or several issues in the past; all seemed to us of a generation that has matured along with this magazine: a generation for the most part younger than that of John Heath-Stubbs or Robert Lowell.*

Editing poetry for The Paris Review *was, from the magazine's inception until the end of its ninth year, the task of Donald Hall. We believe that all whose work has traveled into print through his firm and friendly hands will want to join sincerely in thanking him.*

by X. J. Kennedy

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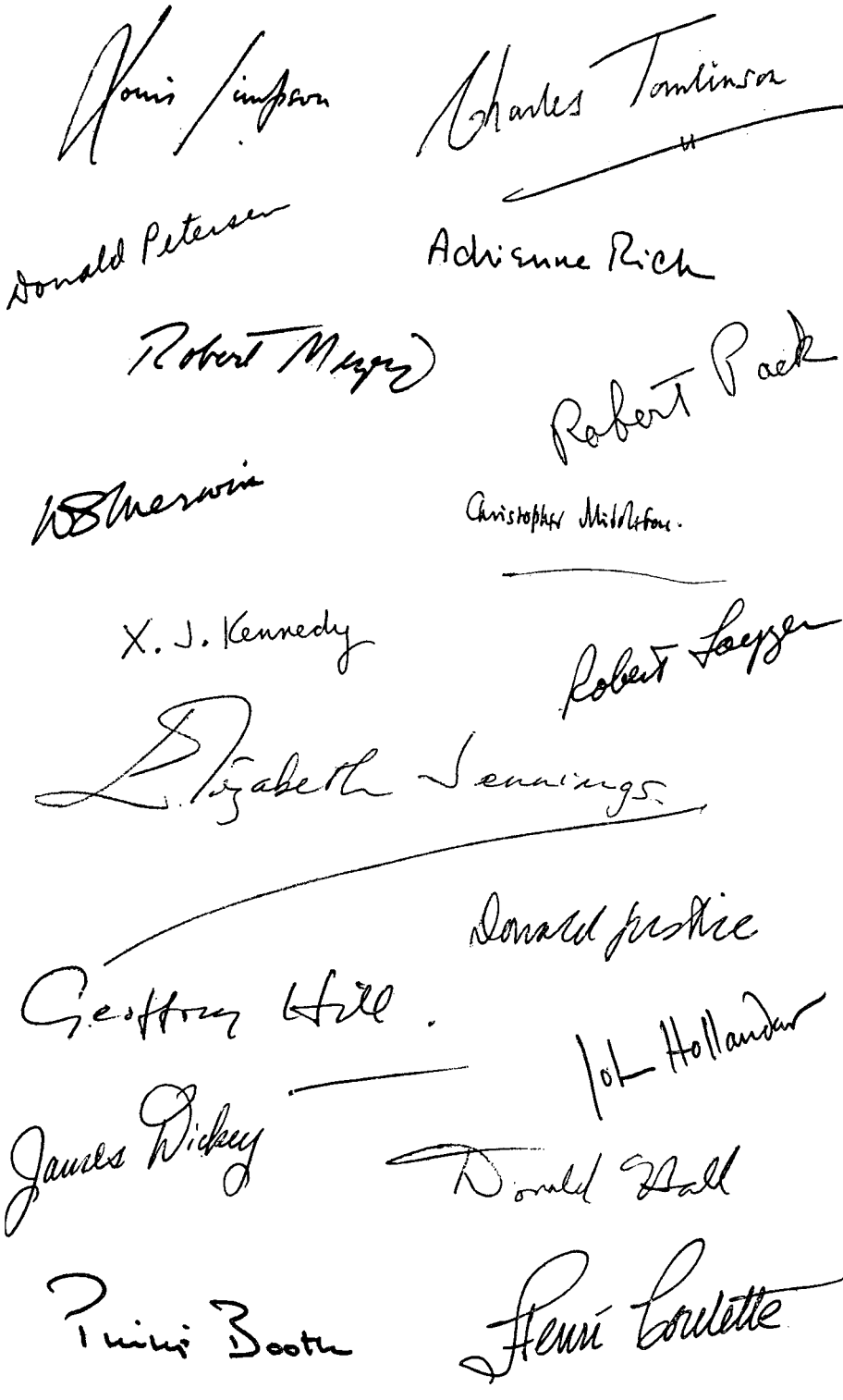

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MAKING IT

A Proem to Something Longer

Once, but once, did I fail my Muse, who, lying
(Golden-shadowed shape) by the flaring candle,
Urged me upward. But there was more to dying
Than I could handle.

Girl of gold, you worked such a leaden vengeance
On my poor pen three weeks ago: I tried to
Raise it. No. Despite your presumed attentions
All I could ride to

Was the jangling creak of a bedspring, failing
Sounds not even mine, that were made to shake it
On some record, behind a swish youth's wailing.
Help me to make it!

How the candle guttered and died! Its throbbing
Flame had dripped a sadness of wax that crowned us
Both with hot, red drops of its final sobbing:
Heavens around us

Seemed just then to flicker a stormy warning.
Was it that? Or was it the candle's trembling,
Making instant shiftings from night to morning,
Never dissembling

Really, but immersed in imaginations?
Fireworks sprouting visions aloft, and breaking
Up the mindless night with illuminations,
Feigning, not faking,

Never can quite vanish completely for us,
After-images will outlast the hissing
Violence of rocketing lights, the chorus,
Sighing and kissing.

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Come then, let us celebrate all this fire:
Not to do it now would be to deny it.
Mirror, bed and discarded clothes conspire,
Beg us to try it.

Help me now, dear girl; neither pot nor liquor
Turns the poem on, helps us to get connected.
All our golden cities are growing sicker.
Am I infected?

Are you down with something? I'm feeling seedy,
As I grope through blankets of silence. Bend, O
Unforgiving presence! But no: *Perdidi*
Musam tacendo

(Help me!) *nec me Apollo respicit* (as A-
Nonymous once whispered, a played-out Roman);
I, laid-up New Yorker, feel that it has a
Touch of the omen,

This half-buried failure of mine to make it,
One July night, tangled up with the legs of
Her who was my Muse once. We both must take it.
Using the dregs of

Sour wines of embarassment, and refusing
Drinks from untipped cups of delight, my shaking
Hand must mix some cocktail of your own choosing,
And of my making;

Drink; then do and die. If I've been too clever
This should make me stop, for my stomach's queasy:
Making something up out of nothing's never
Happy or easy.

—JOHN HOLLANDER

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FOR A FUTURE

Your camping lantern shone among
the cottonwoods. It was then
I should have come. Watching—
the way your lantern swung—
I could have told you from anyone.

Again, now. I shall bar no holds,
but surge to you, across darkness.
Fluffy as the owls, firm as ready apples,
under your window I shall stand.
Your wall's chimney bricks do for my toes.

It was long ago, in the mountains.
Such deep snow all tracks were gone.
When you slipped I caught you,
pushed you upright with a hand.
Then you were light, and still you are.

The cottonwoods, the antique canyon,
what a place, of tamarisk and sand.
You stood on the sand among rocks,
and stared the sun's way. The truth
was moving so fast I could not stop.

Now there are these cottages, tonight.
Between them, the beans and tomatoes
make an odd place, to be sure, for us
together to come to. And perhaps,
after all, it will be too cold,

or our moans will disturb the cows, then
they'd wake the others, coughing;
or the chimney bricks under the appletrees
will not support now the toes unskilled
from being denied you, for so long.

—CHRISTOPHER MIDDLETON

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LAST DAYS OF PROSPERO

The aging magician retired to his island.
It was not so green as he remembered,
Nor did the sea caress its headlands
With the customary nuptial music.

He did not mind. He would not mind,
So long as the causeway to the mainland
Were not repaired, so long as the gay
Little tourist steamer never again

Lurched late into harbor, and no one
Applied for a license to reopen
The shuttered, gilt casino. Better,
He said, an isle unvisited

Except for those sea-birds come to roost
On the roofs of the thousand ruined cabañas,
Survivors; or the strayed whale offshore,
Suspicious, surfacing to spout,

Noble as any fountain of Milan...
The cave? That was as he had left it,
Amply provisioned against the days
To come. His cloak? Neat on its hanger;

The painted constellations, though faded
With damp a little, still glittered
And seemed in the dark to move on course.
His books? He knew where they were drowned.

(What tempests he had caused, what lightnings
Loosed in the rigging of the world!)
If now it was all to do again,
Nothing lacked to his purpose, only

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Some change in the wording of the charm,
Some slight reshuffling of negative
And verb, perhaps—that should suffice.
So, so. Meanwhile he paced the strand,

Debating, as old men will, with himself
Or the waves, though, as it was, the sea
Seemed only to go on washing and washing
Itself, as if to be clean of something.

—DONALD JUSTICE

CROSS TIES

Out walking ties left over from a track
Where nothing travels now but rust and grass,
I half-believe in something that would pass
Growing to hurtle from behind my back
And when the night wind slams by, give a start:
Out of its mass the disembodied wail
Of a far night-shift like a bag of mail
Is flung. Moon looms, her headbeam rips apart
A cloud and strews it. Wings thrash: down to strafe
The crouched grass drops a mousehawk. There's a screech
As steel stretched taut till severed. Out of reach
Or else beneath desiring, I go safe,
Walk on, tensed for a leap, unreconciled
To a dark void all kindness.

When I spill
The salt I throw the Devil some and, still,
I let them sprinkle water on my child.

—X. J. KENNEDY

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TWO POEMS

FATHER TO SON

I do not understand this child
Though we have lived together now
In the same house for years. I know
Nothing of him, so try to build
Up a relationship from how
He was when small. Yet have I killed

The seed I spent or sown it where
The land is his and none of mine?
We speak like strangers, there's no sign
Of understanding in the air.
This child is built to my design
Yet what he loves I cannot share.

Silence surrounds us. I would have
Him prodigal, returning to
His father's house, the home he knew,
Rather than see him make and move
His world. I would forgive him too,
Shaping from sorrow a new love.

Father and son, we both must live
On the same globe and the same land.
He speaks: I cannot understand
Myself, why anger grows from grief.
We each put out an empty hand,
Longing for something to forgive.

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PLANCK'S THEORY OF CHANCE

So, at the base of all we know
And think most ordered, there presides
Chance, the prime mover who provides
The thrust and pull, the ebb and flow,
The seed which scatters and divides.

Yet at the surface we but see
Smooth order, flowing waves, control
That makes us think of clarity,
That gives us some sense of a whole;
Yet chance provides the destiny.

The theory works and has been proved,
But still it is the surface thing
That is admired by us and loved.
To the sweet clarities we cling
Although we are at random moved.

Is love like this also and do
Our fluctuating feelings fall
By chance from me, by chance to you?
If so, the wonder is how all
The depths we plumb ring clear and true.

Elizabeth Jennings

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HERITAGE

Brooming the streets, sick drunk he hated life.
Winter after winter, his whining wife
Forgave him about midnight, and then she prayed,
John, 3–16. Pure slag-heap, smoldering his bed.
One winter afternoon of snow and smoke,
Fuddled by horses, traffic lights, and drink,
He tripped on old horse manure, and sprawled
Along the curb, favoring his broken back,
Chuckling through rot-gut fumes.
Pink graduates from morticians' colleges
Scuttered like roaches out of septic tanks
And offered bids. They haled him out of sight.
Three days, he harrowed the white funeral home.
They priced his molars, calculated sums,
Giggled together if they cracked his thumbs,
Threaded the cat-gut, and sewed up his gums.

He loved his brother, Christ alone knows why.
Christ and his family know he never told.
One evening, when his time had come to die,
My father said since I was four years old
I might as well get used to something now:
I had the old man's brother's name, and so
The dead drunk, wallowing in death, loved me.

I have nothing to live for but my death:
Alone, last of a crowd of solitudes,
Half-wondering where I am and how I came
To carry a beloved dead man's name.
Lashed to the wall by pain, half stupified
By dreams of liquor, my grandfather died
Hoping to hang his fearsome love on me.
All right, he did so; now I let him be.
And, though I know the comfort of a lie,
I pray to keep my mouth shut when I die.

—JAMES WRIGHT

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LINES WRITTEN NEAR SAN FRANCISCO

I

I wake and feel the city trembling.
Yes, there is something unsettled in the air
And the earth is uncertain.

And so it was for the tenor Caruso.
He couldn't sleep—you know how the ovation
Rings in your ears, and you re-sing your part.

And then the ceiling trembled
And the floor moved. He ran into the street.
Never had Naples given him such a reception!

The air was darker than Vesuvius.
"O mamma mia,"
He cried, "I've lost my voice!"

At that moment the hideous voice of Culture,
Hysterical woman, thrashing her arms and legs,
Shrieked from the ruins.

At that moment everyone became a performer.
Otello and Don Giovanni
And Figaro strode on the midmost stage.

In the high windows of a burning castle
Lucia raved. Black horses
Plunged through fire, dragging the wild bells.

The curtains were wrapped in smoke. Tin swords
Were melting; masks and ruffs
Burned—and the costumes of the peasants' chorus.

Night fell. The white moon rose
And sank in the Pacific. The tremors
Passed under the waves. And Death rested.

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2.

Now, as we stand idle
Watching the silent, bowler-hatted man,
The engineer, who writes in the smoking field;

Now as he hands the paper to a boy,
Who takes it and runs to a group of waiting men,
And they disperse and move toward their wagons,

Mules bray and the wagons move—
Wait! Before you start—
(Already the wheels are rattling on the stones)

Say, did your fathers cross the dry Sierras
To build another London?
Do Americans always have to be second-rate?

Wait! For there are spirits
In the earth itself, or the air, or sea.
Where are the aboriginal American devils?

Cloud shadows, pine shadows
Falling across the bright Pacific bay—
(Already they have nailed rough boards together.)

Wait only for the wind
That rustles in the eucalyptus tree.
Wait only for the light

That trembles on the petals of a rose.
(The mortar sets—the Banks are the first to rise)
Wait for a rose, and you may wait forever.

The silent man mops his head and drinks
Cold lemonade. San Francisco
Is a city second only to Paris.

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3.

Every night, at the end of America,
We taste our wine, looking at the Pacific.
How sad it is, the end of America!

While we were waiting for the land,
They'd finished it—with gas drums
On the hilltops, cheap housing in the valleys,

Where lives are mean and wretched.
But the Banks thrive, and the realtors
Rejoice—they have their America.

Still, there is someting unsettled in the air.
Out there on the Pacific
There's no America but the Marines.

Whitman was wrong about the People,
But right about himself. The land is within.
At the end of the open road we come to ourselves.

Though mad Columbus follows the sun
Into the sea, we cannot follow.
We must remain, to serve the returning sun,

And to set tables for death.
For we are the colonists of Death—
Not, as some think, of the English.

And are preparing thrones for him to sit,
Poems to read, and beds
In which it may please him to rest.

This is the land
The pioneers looked for, shading their eyes
Against the sun—the world of flowers and dreams.

—LOUIS SIMPSON

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LICENSED TO OVERDRIVE
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"Good just barely afternoon, Kee-mo Sah-bee," purred the voice in his shirt pocket, and on signal Morty smiled secretly, brushed his hand inside and without losing a beat of the packing and stacking, fondled the warm little head and whispered back "Good just barely afternoon, Kee-mo." So reliable, so dependable, such truth; the big hand at the top of the clock was a notch past the little one, and the actuality of Morty's schedule had been reconfirmed: He had indeed stacked boxes in the allotted time, four sets to a box, from the corner of Grossman's stockroom to the window side and around to the chalkline halfway back. Straightening up for the first time since Rambling With Gambling, he looked around and again carefully checked. And doublechecked. Almost satisfied, he nodded and looked down and with his thumb and forefinger delicately circled held out his pocket so the little voice inside could get some well-deserved air. Yeah. The soft, smooth tones came floating up to him, happy to be free—"Bob Manders here, you lucky people, and right now for all you winners and losers and all you in-betweeners,

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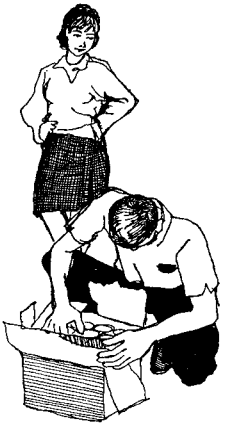
just this barely minute, *here* is the *Chairman of the Board.*" Standing perfectly still lest he in some way spoil things, Morty slowly absorbed the granting of his wish, the all morning hunch that at good just barely afternoon a wonderful new surprise might leap out of his pocket. And (typically) the shrewd little bugger had reached down and was producing, Morty realized with growing certainty, the Chairman of the Board. Himself! Excitedly, but very gently, he fingered the tiny tone dial so the Chairman's voice, all light and zingy, filled the room. Hey now, Chair breezed, they gottan awfullotta coffee in Brazil, and standing respectfully beside his last box, head down, Morty memorized the new fact that coffee beans grow by the zillions way down among brazilians (wherever brazilians was). He stood stiffly, mouthing the words until the Chairman had finished, then as though the command had been snapped by Mr. Grossman himself, he bent down to finish the line-up to the wall by the first afternoon Robert Hall jingle. The voice next to his ear purring away, the big, filled room, neat and cosy, like his own cosy room. Slowly but precisely, he lifted boxes, fitted and closed, feeling the assurance of each familiar position. Pleased that all the while Bob was confiding—anxiously—in him. Not, of course, that Bob had right to worry, for Morty was plenty safe all right, and not just half safe and a little sniff under the arm for Bob and the little geezer was proof positive. Plus, for insurance against offending, the Arrid with Perstop in his own drawer, marked with his own name, Morty J. Aranow.



He worked in his quiet, soothing swing, alone in stock (but not *really* alone), handling all the work Billy and he used to do together, until Mr. Grossman patted him on the shoulder and rewarded him with the entire room while Billy

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worked the truck with Sam. Which was a fine reward since Billy never talked to him anyway, except to say knock down that stinkin noise jocko, and it gave him the final, necessary area to complete his circle of command. This was probably (beside Baby) Morty's most important possession—space to be in charge of. Whether around him as he worked, or in an invisible case as he walked the street with the world (his world) reporting from his pocket, or in the darkness of his West 88th Street room, these manageable areas formed the compartments of his life. Aware of the continuity in this final link, he moved now along his chalkmark, hearing Bob Manders talk of familiar things—the Chairman, his boys, Sammy, Pete and Deano, Lavoris and Chockfullanuts donuts. Listening with the reassuring knowledge that they would check into each life space, he assessed soft little Patti, happy Julius and weisenheimer Bobby Darin, who would try for chairmanship, but fail miserably. And reinforced, he pulled hard for the wall, knowing in a dark, dim way that he was repeating the terrible swim for the dock in the great lake of that special camp mama had sent him to many years ago. Feeling from this safe distance the terror of the dock sliding away no matter how hard he kicked and screamed, demonstrating now how smoothly he could stroke, while the comforting lift in Bob's voice told him the wall was close by and he had once more reached shore with no hard, mocking voices tearing at him. Patting his pocket, flipping sweat off his forehead (not worrying about his armpits, which were parched and burning), he awaited Bobby Hall's commercial message and the 12:30 news, which from dateline Delhi, Moscow, Berlin and New York would converge under his nose. Next to the wall he sat down on his stool and pulled out his first Kent with the micronite filter of the day. He lit up, inhaled and felt so much better (naturally) about smoking with the taste of Kent. After the news, he repeated station identification and then with a happy puff of surprise welcomed the razor-fine voice of William B., pinchhitting for the vacationing Big Wilson, an extra added bonus, since William was a nightly visitor with the Make Believe Ball-

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room and now they could walk home together and kick off the evening with no break in the space links. He permitted himself another Kent, pulling deeply on the filtered flavor and stared happily at the floor, which like his pocket and private compartments, was always there.

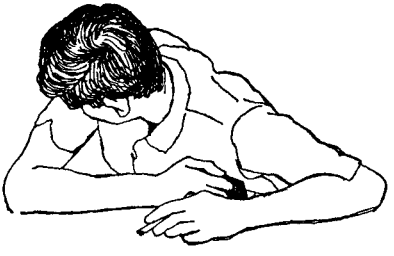
"Why do you always look down?" the quiet voice demanded; slowly his head swung to the tip of the voice and marked a pair of spiked heels, then it moved to bulging insteps and on to pink, hair-crushing stockings. Up the stockings slowly to the inch of white, the dress, the twisted waist, the puffy chest and the smiling face, which on contact opened and said, "You look so sad, always with your head down, why is your head always down?" Miss Mandell. Tiny Miss Mandell, one week in the office, leaning to one side with her hip always stuck out as if it couldn't stand her crooked back, with her hair all frizzed and her nose so small, how could she breathe? She shivered him with a draught in his stomach. Since the time in that class with all the strange, jerking, drooling kids, ugliness had chilled him, then reminded him of his superiority. "You know," Miss Mandell said, "if you look up, way up, you'll feel a whole lot better."

"I feel good," he said; if he got real lucky she would disappear and leave him loose like everyone else, but she stayed harder and laughed as if he had said something so funny. "*Hah*. What in the world are you listening to? You're always listening to the radio."

"The William B. Williams show."

"Do you like that program?"

"Yeah I like it.'



"And what else do you listen to?"

"A lotta different things."

She sat down beside him. "Like what?" she said. "What do you like?" Asking it as if she were that

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picky teacher who always demanded what, why, which way, how does it make you feel . . .

"A lotta things."

The breath hissed out of her tiny nose holes in the teacher-mama sound. "That is not very real," she said softly while he pulled out a Grossman towel rack and dug into the hard plastic. "Yeah..." In and out his nail, bending, cracking... "I mean," she said with a push-smile, "it is not exactly flesh and blood."

"Yeah I know."

"It is steel and plastic and the Philco people make a million of them. And a million dollars besides."

"Yeah I know."

His Kent was now down to the white micronite filter and he was dangerously close to falling off schedule; a fleck of blood stained his nail and he covered his hand. "Morty—if I may be so informal—" she said. "would you like to have lunch with me?"

"Oh I can't, I *always* eat here," he lied. "I—uh—gotta sangwich." Her frizzy head bobbed up and down. "So this once you break a rule and come out." She leaned close to him. "I'll tell you a secret I wouldn't ordinarily tell," she said. (She sure didn't use Arrid with Perstop, if that was her secret, forget it.) "I don't like to eat with Mildred," she whispered. "She's very loud. I *cannot* stand loud people. I like *sensitive* people, Morty, you know?" That tone, a familiar ping in his belly where the feelings about mama lay, all behaved and sleepy, until a Miss Mandell came along with a nudge... 'You can do it dolling, you talk beautiful, just stand up on the stage and talk, sweetheart...'

"Well I can't." A thing he had never said to mama, oh he loved his mama all right, but thank goodness she was dead.

"Not even," she said, "if I say pretty please with sugar and cream on it? You know, Morty, I like William B. Williams. And I like the Make Believe Ballroom too."

He looked. Who would say things he had locked up in his head? Could all that ugly?... But wait, that kind said things just to agree, to get you someplace... But she *knew* the Ball-

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room... Yeah, well it was *his* Ballroom... "No, I can't."

"Leona, aren't you ready yet?" called a whistle-thin voice. Miss Tomack. The heavy body followed the voice and she filled the doorway, thick, tight, spilly and blonde; a cow, a soft cow. Beside her, Billy boy, red and sweating from the morning deliveries. "Come on doll, leave jocko alone," Billy said. "You wanna give him bad dreams? Besides he gotta be free to do his union bustin." Miss Mandell turned pink, all except her nose which stayed white as if he had pushed his thumb into the middle of her face. "Oh oh," Miss Tomack said, "I didn't *know*."

"I'll—ah—be right with you," Miss Mandell said. Whispering "I'll take a raincheck," she turned and with her stuck out hip holding up her dress, she walked to the door and the three of them dropped away from him like the cellophane off his Kent box. He stood very still and heard Miss Tomack's tough, piercing voice say I bet he *sleeps* with that thing, and then quiet. He roused up and hurried to the back to wash up with Dial for people who like people who like Dial.

The morning was boxed in, so lunch was the next hurdle. He gathered himself and walked downstairs on the right, walked to Ninth Avenue and crossed at his corner and proceeding still on the right, with the image of M. Aranow flitting reassuringly beside him in the windows, walked one block south, where the shape and color of Roger's Bar and Grille told him he had once again made a dead reckoning. He entered through the waiting side entrance and occupied his private space while his stool at the counter served another customer. When it was released, he straddled it, felt the smooth old leather under his behind and knew he was safely at lunch. Good old Roger winked, came over and gravely shook hands; the good old guy always shook hands. He always said "What'll it be sport?" sticking his jaw out and waiting, which were important things to do. He said it. He did it and Morty wriggled on the stool. He looked down at the shiny beer taps and felt the same warmth he always did; his buddies were in charge of the golden, cold streams that

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were so mellow, not sweet, just the dry flavored treat, and if the beautiful glassful never tasted quite like that, it was *his* fault, not the golden stream's. Another wriggle; he looked at Roger and brimming all over with excitement, circled his forefinger and thumb and propped the other three straight up like an indian headdress. Roger nodded. "Hey Charlie," he called, "make it a Ballantine for the sport." The stiffly held fingers tingled. Oh that Roger... Morty drank the golden brew, savoring the extra two weeks of mellowing in the cool autumn sun. Roger was beckoning; he swallowed hard and leaned far over. "Say don't forget to vote, sport," Roger said confidentially. "Remember last year you picked a winner." It was the embarrassing truth and flushing, he looked sideways at the six overpoweringly radiant Miss Rheingold candidates lined up over the taps. Their smiles were full on him and he dropped his eyes. "Who do you like, expert?" Roger said and Morty felt the bright hot look of one particular candidate, whose voice had followed him from WHN to WVNJ and whose name could be said over and over without losing its sense; he cleared his throat. "Pru Pishney," he said firmly, glancing up. Roger looked thoughtful; he pointed to a smiling, blackhaired girl, Dial-clean, the whiteness behind her neat red lips proclaiming careful brushing after every meal. "Not bad," said Roger, "but she ain't stuff." He caressed a round, strapped up, spilling over blonde. A Miss Tomack. Ugh. "That I like," Roger said. "She puts out." Oh no! He looked straight at Pru and caught her need. Whipping out a pencil, right there in front of people, he tore off a ballot and X'd in under the two capital P's and jammed paper into the box; Pru's smile of gratitude burned and he hunched over, away from this public display of feeling. Roger's hand was reaching over and patting. "That's OK sport, you did OK," and he swung his head back and forth, wanting desperately to say something. His hand snaked to his pocket and found the dial and brushed it. Judy's voice poured over the counter and with a deep breath he straightened up and looked straight at Roger. Roger patted again. 'Hey there," he said, "how's the baby?"

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Now there was something to talk about. "Oh good, Roger, he said. "Last night I went on the roof and she got Boston."

"That a fact? Hey now, how about that. Say Morty, I been thinking about something. You know what you remind me of?"

"What, what, Roger?" Roger wouldn't kid, not Roger.

"I'll tellya. A mother kangaroo. You know what that is?"

"Sure." That picture, tiny head, shriveled little arms. Great flat feet. Why? Oh yes... "It's a animal. It jumps."

"That's the ticket, kid. Well the mother kangaroo keeps her baby in a pouch and the kid gets a free ride all over, you can just see her head peeking out. Get it? That's you and baby."

Hey now, he liked that, he liked it fine, especially he and baby bouncing over the roofs. Except, well couldn't the father kangaroo have a pouch, too? But don't ask Roger, he might say no. So of all the million things begging to be said, he said "Yeah."

"OK sport, OK. Well Morty," Roger said, shifting to his business voice, "what's your pleasure?" The important question. He patted his pouch and felt the little kangaroo crooning softly; he took a look at Pru Pishney beaming at him. And pop. Into his head where a moment before only clashing thoughts and fuzziness existed came the answer to Roger's question. Clearly and precisely it formed, his nightly dream of lunch that was buried deep until the big question released it. "Oh," he said carelessly, drumming his feet against the counter, while the dream grew handles just for him, "I think I have some Uncle Ben's long grain Spanish Rice Mix."

You take care of an afternoon and it takes care of you. You do this important thing by fitting the afternoon exactly into a beginning and an end, and after a million perfectly fitting afternoons, you do it with a watchful confidence. First the news. That ends. Then gently you switch to lively Murray the K and pay close attention to his hard, demanding voice and his boom boom music and his longer, louder commercial messages, you take that time and split Murray into units of

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three boom discs and three loud messages and after a floor length of packing cases has used up its units, you take your middle break and get a lot to like with a Marlboro, filter, flavor, flip top box. OK. Check. You are on the mark, the room is all lined up and Murray swings into his closing theme and you switch to WNEW and the familiar voice that says "Good evening world," you hustle for the window, fold one, two three tops down, hit the last case, push, bend, jam it together and the afternoon is shot to hell...

For a moment after it was packed up he listened to United Airlines and Golden Coach (with high-stepping horses and everything?) to Hawaii, and then he walked back to the john and changed to his good Arrow shirt with the long-lasting Dart collar. When he came back, Dialed, Gleemed, Vitalised and Murined, Miss Mandell was hitching her hip up to her hand. "My my, but you do a lovely job," she said, sagging toward the window, looking at the cases, all in line with their tops tucked in four ply. "It's the way I do," he said, itching slightly. "Well," she said, "it is a lovely piece of work. You must be a very conscientious person."

"It's the way I do," he said, the itch spreading. Twisty Miss Mandell was standing in the doorway and if she didn't move he was trapped, and she didn't move. He carefully remembered to forget something and looked around to find it. "Suppose," she said while he glanced in every direction, a funny smile (not hah hah, the other funny) on her face, "suppose we (him and her?)... walk uptown... Together." (Yeah him and her.) "You see," she said, still not hah hah funny, "I know all your pertinent personal background. I know you reside at 103 West 88th Street. See how nosy I am?"

"Uh huh."

She gave that hard push cackle. "Oh that's cute. Now come on. I simply won't take no for an answer."

"I walk *all* the way home. It's a real long walk."

"My my, aren't you the regular health fiend. Well I'll just accompany you to 23rd, I'm not so athletic." That stubby thing was her hand poking out at him. "Come on," she said,

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"I'll let you listen to your precious Make Believe Ballroom. Maybe we'll hear a little Frank Sinatra, he's just right in the early evening." The hand wriggling, waving, snapping. "Come." He walked up and touched it; it closed rough and sweaty around him, badly in need of Campana's Italian Balm, choky and in charge, mama's hand. Thank goodness Billy and Miss Tomack weren't hanging around and Mr. Grossman of course didn't even look up from his books as they passed through the office and walked downstairs. Miss Mandell pressured him to a stop on the sidewalk and pulled in a load of bus fumes through those incredibly tiny holes. "I just adore New York on a fall evening," she said and whistled the fumes back onto the street. "Suppose we walk up 9th Avenue, all right, Morton?"

"Uh huh." Could he not? Of course. Not...

They started out into the sort of evening he loved to wander through alone, smelling, looking, listening to the security drifting out of his pocket, but now he had to share and that was a complicated and difficult process. Especially with the Chairman of the Board coming on and winging smoothly over the sidewalk. "Oh look at me now," sang the Chair and Morty's neck ached from its sharp bend down to his pocket, while his outside ear concentrated on Miss Mandell, who was making strange noises on the other side. The noises were turning his face red for Miss Mandell was singing. "Oh look at you now," she was singing in a high, trembling voice into his red face. "*You're* not the guy who thought about love and *you're* not the guy... and *you're* not the guy... but LOOK AT YOU NOW." Her knife thin nose wobbling, her stuck out hip brushing against him, drawing every pair of eyes in New York down onto them, while mama said go on sonny sing a song, go ahead go ahead, SING...He pulled away from the eyes of New York, but the tight hand pulled him back fast and hard. "Jack you're *ready*," she shrilled, the Campanaless hand squeezing. His eyes probed the tongues of his shoes. Silence. Only the Chair. "You quiet thing," she said. You should express yourself more. You ever try singing? I always sing when I'm lonesome or have problems."

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"Yeah."... No!

She linked arms and locked her hand. "There, a gentleman always offers his arm." Her voice firm and businesslike, her office phone voice. "Now you just remember that, Morton."

"Yeah."

"Silly. Say yes, not yeah."

"Yes."

The Chair had made way for William B. who was saying his clever things and Morty couldn't pick up one; his shoulder, receiving signals, began suddenly to hurt and hunching to his ear was soothing. Ahhh Ann Margret, clear and soft, filled his head. Pru Pishney would have an Ann Margret sound. A hip, a hand, a voice knocked, scraped, pierced; his shoulder rose like a frightened cat's; Miss Mandell was shaking him. "Sill, stop with that thing. I'm *talking* to you."

"Yes Miss Mandell."

"Leona, silly. My name is Leona. Say it."

"Leona."

"Say yes, Leona."

"Yes, Leona."

She hugged his arm. "That's darling," she said, smoothing his shoulder down. "There... Morton... do you live alone?"

"Yes, Leona."

"I do too. New York is awfully big when you're alone." A whistle sigh. "Oh I could go out with oodles of people, but I don't know. They're all sex fiends if you know what I mean."

"Yes, Leona." Nah, he didn't know, but he knew Ann Margret had gone...

"What do you do on weekends, Morton?"

This was the complicated part, doing two things at once, listening to Annette Funicello, dealing with Miss Mandell, figuring out her questions; that one, what was she leading up to, she was leading up to something, why else ask, Annette never made such demands... and Miss Mandell was waiting, so it was an important question, to be answered carefully, like what'll he have for lunch... Annette was resting, William B. was back on and Morty strained toward his pocket

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for help... Albany? Forty minutes to Albany, oh thank God for William B...

"I visit my folks in Albany," he said clearly.

There was a quick satisfaction in the way he had registered, for Miss Mandell stopped suddenly and rewarded him with no smile. "All right," she said after a while, her voice low and flat, indicating an even greater success than he suspected, "all right Morton, I understand," and then the sad look struck again, and the serious eyes and he realized his success had been punctured; of all the looks in the world he hated serious eyes most, they always followed his most enjoyable words and he was back to confusion. "Well well, here is my station," she said, her eyes accusing him. Unlocking her arm, she reached over and patted his shirt pocket. "Take care. You have fun now, hear?" And turning quickly, she ran down the steps, while he stood there with his arm obediently ready and his thoughts of success and pity mixing in his head. For a moment he stood still, leaning, and then straightening his arm, his body, he realized he was finally all alone. WHEW. It was better than going to the bathroom after hours of tortured waiting. WHEW. He uncoiled all the tautness in him up to the sky, his outdoor ceiling, realizing all that the aloneness could mean: Now, right this barely very minute, all loose and content he could take off through the evening lights, he and baby kangaroo, and without complications, spot all the friendship landmarks and feel the familiar ideas. This night stretching before him (and all the others) would be his to twist and shape any old way, alone, because the sad eyes of Miss Mandell, he knew from experience, guaranteed an end to interference. Watering all the way through his Arrid, turning up Annette Funicello and running hard for West 88th Street in time to make his first evening show, Morty felt every bit of his old control telling him he was free, *free*.

A good supper, a *great* supper from the golden rich products of the Campbell Kitchen. A fast, efficient wash-up with new Mar*vel*ous Vel and a few relaxing minutes with his not

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too strong not too light Viceroy's got the taste that's right Friday night treat, and he was ready. With his room and himself in order, he went out to the hall and climbed the ladder to the roof, where he could begin his week-end, as always, with El Amor. Up there he was definitely in charge, he and old El and for their quota of one hour together they ran things from their shared platform above the city. But then at eight o'clock, at the beep, delicately, precisely and with the buzzing white membrane next to his ear, Morty split the static between El and Herb Oscar and drew in the strange, exotic voice of Boston, far at the top of the square of his world, far up north. With a grin of delight he lay back on his blanket and let Boston, speaking a common language, pour over him. Alone together. In the dark, with the lights springing up all round. He soaked himself in thoughts of Boston until Johnny Johns, the jock with the sock, said this the 3 oh mark y'all and Julie smoked her last Marlboro, and then reluctantly, but firmly, for he had a schedule to meet, he got up and went down to his room. Humming filter flavor fliptop box, he propped Baby beside the sink and Gleemed his teeth and gargled with ice blue Micrin. He even allowed himself a peek in the mirror and was less disappointed than usual. Then he kneeled and said the prayer that mama had taught him and made him promise to say to avoid destruction, and placing the warm, black and white voice in its quilted cigar box, he dived into his bed and melted into oneness with the mattress and the blankets, his reward for a completed week. He took a last took at the world of light and reached over and clicked off the switch and then stared up at his new world. He waited. At just barely after midnight, when the world should all be sleepin and a melody comes creepin, he turned to the Milk-

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man's Matinee and blended Milk into the life above him. He played with streaks of white and colored lights for a while, then slowly became aware of a memory from the day looming behind the screen. He stared hard and struggled for it, reaching, then falling away from a certain well-known face, a form, finding it hard, tough work to recapture the outside. But... yes, unmistakably, Miss Mandell, the eyes, the no nose, the hip that led its own life. Yes, sad eyes. He shivered into his blanket, grateful that he was here, she was there, and another form rose beside Miss Mandell, bigger, tighter, bulgier. Disgustingly familiar. That chest, the belly stretching the creased dress to the breaking point. Miss Ugh! Tomack, Shivers down the line, to his big toe, ripple shivers. What had she said, the smart belly?... I bet he *sleeps* with that thing... Yes, she had a mouth, that one, bigger than horrible Betsy Freiberg, *bigger* than Kick em in the balls Tilda Tatzi... Relax buddy boy, he whispered, and just in time, for he was getting plenty annoyed with Miss Tomack, sweet little Patti's voice came rustling up to him and he kicked his dirty night thoughts in the can. As if a giant eraser had done its job, the ceiling above him stretched clean and pure and white. He smiled up at the pureness... "I wanna be loved by you by you and nobody else but you," whispered the voice beside him, "I wanna be kissed by you..." He squirmed and reached over and picked up Patti's voice and cradled it against his lips.

Saturday. Sun in the window. Mrs. Melchas flushing the john. Mr. Ayub vacuuming. Late it would start; he would roll over and flick on Jack Lacy, roll back and stare at the ceiling and enjoy. Under his sleep, through his dreaming, he knew how it would happen, and Saturday, sun, Mrs. Melchas, the john, Mr. Ayub, the vacuum, they never missed, nor did Morty ever disappoint Morty. At Listen to Lacy Time exactly, he blinked, listened, grinned, rolled, flicked, returned, stared, enjoyed. Zing, boom, pow. A half hour he had in which to absorb the top ten and the pick hit of the week; at the pick's last drum-beat he flung back his blanket and packed with energy, he leaped up. Stroking Baby to full

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throttle so he could hear friendly Dick DiFretas and the news through his shower, he ran down the hall and sloshed all over with hexachlorophene and glowed as the weisenheimer bacteria folded up and plopped off him like dead flies. He shaved closely with Gillette Foamy, feeling the impervious armor of K34 guard his face from infectious nicks and scrapes. He ate his Breakfast of Champions, staring at the excitement of the back panel, and then he carefully dressed and groomed. Thom McAn, Robert Hall, Arrow, Vitalis, Griffin Scuffy-shine. Saturday cigarette, Imperial York. When he stepped out into Saturday, he and his friends were ready.

Bright, wide open, a lot of time and space to mark off and handle. He walked his carefully allotted paces to Central Park West and turned toward his itchy hand; with Jack Lacy chatting away, he hurried from 88th to Times Square, recognizing it from all the other Saturdays, and feeling the crest of the right moment, walked quickly downstairs. Taking a deep breath, he pulled a token from his collection and stuffed it into the slot and pushed his way inside, where it was long and dark and deliciously threatening. Now the most delicious part... For a long time he would stand and sweat, until the train with the familiar letters roared in. He would swell up with another breath, say so long city and step on... Get ready... the train... *roar*... NOW. He was inside, breathing hard, leaning against the door, hurtling through the cellar of the city, and suddenly Baby was silent and he had entered the worst and the best part, all thrills and fear and doubt. Would he make it? Would he not? Oh boy!... Sure he would (like always), but... always the *but*. Boy. Now came another screw of fear as the silence in his pocket grew real. Of course she didn't like it down here and he understood, who could blame her? But it was rough... He bit his cheek and grabbed a steel strap and hung on as they swayed crazily through flickers of dark and light. Another sickening zoom and his ears were popping; oh boy, up there was the river with a million pounds of water waiting for one little leak! Swallow, Bubby, he cautioned, and he worked up some spit and jammed it down; the ears unpopped. PHEW. OK. Now,

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Bubby, look up. There, all around him, taking over from the noise and fear, his old, dear friends. Miss Rheingold, Kent and L & M and Viceroy and Milky Way and Piel's and Gleem and One A Day and Serutan. The jelly hardened in him and he sat down. He crossed his legs. He folded his arms. They were all smiling on him, flashing tans and beautifully smelling teeth, reassuring him that friendship does not flicker out under the river, no matter what. He flashed back on them their own friendly selves, ah there Miss Rheingold, next month Pru Pishney, and Harmon Killebrew, deodorizing with Brake, it is wonderful to see you in a tight spot. The question of escape was settled and he knew he was through the danger; *they* were through, and the river could crash or not as it pleased (till he returned). He leaned back and flicked off stations on each hand. Ten fingers went by and he jumped up, smiled at the friendship circle and charged out. Down the length of the station he pounded and raced up the stairs into the gorgeous sunlight. Hey, Baby's eager voice was climbing all over him, tickling like Mrs. Melchas' puppy, telling him that once again he had pulled through. *Alive*. Soaked (but sweet smelling) through his Arrid, he walked down the middle of the street, savoring his achievement, smiling at everything in this strange Saturday land. The low, flat buildings, the closed down sky, the thin noise evaporating into the clean air, all on a floating dock that he had reached after a week of pulling and pushing. Well now, he honestly felt he had earned his weekly reward, so straight for the suddenly recalled drug store he headed, planning each word ahead of time and tasting the result. When the friendly guy came over, Morty leaned against the counter and casually gave his order: "Say, gimme a Alka Seltzer..."

The boardwalk was practically empty. A little kid with a knish, one with an Eskimo Pie. Three people on the beach. In the water one woman dunking. Long, wide, endless. Morty leaned over the rail and stared at the emptiness and the blackcapped dunker puncturing it. Up and down, down and up, like mama used to bounce. In the cool, wet air Dick Partridge was coming in loud and clear beneath his chin,

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talking over the wind and waves and providing a link with the city, warming the great space that arched over him. Out there beyond the space and the smashing, folding water and the dunker lay the mysteries of Boston, of dateline Berlin, the King of England, or maybe... *nothing*. Ahhhh his big, inside secret. Nothing. All his, figured out by Morty, belonging to Morty, pulling boss Morty down here each week to check up and reconsider. Yes, nothing explained a lot; it was peace, aloneness, simplicity. Nothing meant no careful boxing, no squaring of afternoons, no chalkmarks, lines, marks in or outside his head, no one to talk bad, or talk at all. No *worry*. Only Morty on top of his Simmons mattress, floating gently up and down, far out, just he and Baby and all the great nothing. In a hundred years, when he was finished with Grossman's this is what he would do. Dimly, but unmistakably, he could see Morty Aranow floating around forever. And slowly, deeply he sighed for the day of retirement.

"Oh my what a heart-rending sigh."

A familiar voice, a *very* familiar voice. Here in his nothing. Barging in and upsetting his mattress... Expecting the worse, he turned... The Worse. Miss Mandell, sitting on a bench with her legs crossed and her chin in her hand, studying him like a bill. "Hello there, deep one," she said. Yeah, Miss Mandell all right, not just a faker. Mad with her sad eyes for tricking him into counting on her absence, he mumbled something close to hello and looked longingly out to sea. "Just imagine," Miss Mandell said, "our meeting here. So you come here too. Well well and two more holes in the ground." Around her frizz hair flopped a green scarf, her skirt, tucked under her legs, was escaping and whipping around the bench; she would maybe whip away...? He looked and thought and formed his answer. "Yeah."

"Oh," she said, leaning back and smiling, "I just *adore* Coney Island." (Nah she wouldn't whip away.) "It is so peaceful here. A person can think, you know?"

"Yeah." Funny she should be here, she was never here before, this one...

"What a coincidence," she said, getting up and sliding

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over to him in front of the wind. "Do you come here often?" She leaned over the rail the way he did, and the clean, wet air, that a moment ago had been sprayed with Arrid, touched his nose with a five and dime smell. Breathing through his mouth, he said "Every Saturday," even as he resolved not to.

"Oh so that's what you do, you sly thing. Albany in*deed*." In spite of the miles of boardwalk, she was very close to him. He took a side step. *She* took. "Why do you come here, Morton?" she said.

"It's nice."

"Of course. But every week? I mean like I come to see the water..." She hesitated and looked around. "I'll let you in on something. I never told this to anyone, but I think you'll understand." She laughed quickly. "Well, to me, out there it is like melted rubber. Latex, you know? And that liquid rubber out there is soft and strong and it could hold me up forever. I mean in my imagination, you know? I could recline on that latex and go everyplace I wanted and leave whenever I wanted and just live a beautiful carefree existence. There. Now isn't that silly?"

"Like a mattress?' he asked suspiciously.

"Why yes, like a foam rubber mattress. That's an excellent comparison, Morton." ...Funny, very funny... "Well," she said, "now you know *my* secret. Why do you come?"

Be careful, Buddy, he warned himself. "Oh," he said, "my mother use to take me. I never went no place else."

Her hand was all of a sudden on his arm and she grew very quiet. Then she looked at him and said, "That's sweet." He twisted his head away, to avoid the funny things she always said. What kind of sweet? Mama *liked* Coney Island. She liked to dunk and hold him around as she bobbed up and down, like a big, fat beach ball. My pleasure, it's my pleasure, she would say, holding him tight against her great, soft chest, laughing, then suddenly crying and kissing. Oh my only pleasure, she would say, as under the waves he grabbed onto all the softness and they would sail up and down like one big ball. He felt mama suddenly and stopped the picture. So what sweet? It was dunking... He sighed.

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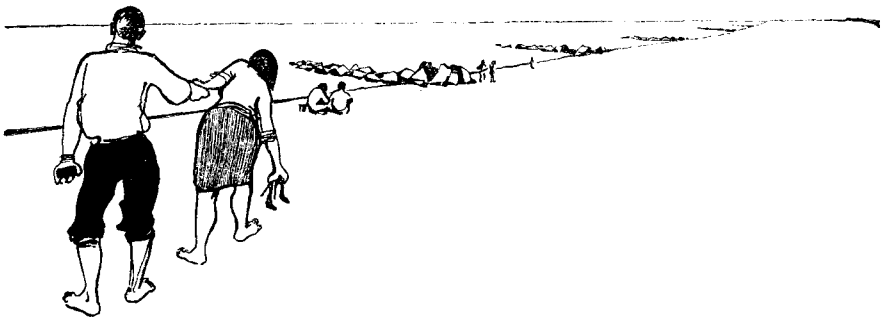

"You're such a sigher," Miss Mandell said. "Please don't sigh so big, Morton. It breaks my heart." ...Stroking his hand... She was off again. Yet, somehow, he didn't feel so bad as in Grossman's... "Morton," she said, "let's go walk on the sand."

"Oh I don't do that."

"Well so now you just do it. Come on, reluctant one, it's really fun." She had an indian lock on his wrist and was pulling him toward the steps, boy she was strong, this little Miss Twist. "Now," she said, "sit down and take off your shoes. Like so..." The long, spike heels were waving in the air. "And roll up your pants so they won't get dirty. Here I'll do it." No no, this he could do, he *could*... but her hands were touching and folding, quick and sure, and there he was looking at his bare feet, pants rolled to the knees. (A darn good thing Dick Partridge couldn't see him.) She stood up and with a good yank pulled him down the steps. He pulled back, she pulled harder, he pulled... The sand was soft and damp. He looked around, up at the boardwalk, figuring his journey in time—a minute ago his body was up there and he could still feel it there, now... Funny... He reached into his pocket and Dick Partridge, who was suddenly very important, belted up to him. On the other side of Dick's voice, Miss

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Mandell was one big smile and the pressure of that deceptive little hand was moving him out, away from the boardwalk, steadying him as he stumbled over the peculiar sand. His hand reached again and came out with Dick Partridge and Dick was a good anchor as he dragged after Miss Mandell. She could sure make time over this stuff, twisty hip or not, and that transmission of strength told him no nonsense now, Morty. So here they were now, out in no man's land where he couldn't turn back, even if he wanted to (which he didn't). She sure knew this place, for right here she stopped and said let's sit down now, we can be all by ourselves here. Plop. Down she went and that steel arm yanked and he was down. "There now, that wasn't so terrible, was it?" And really it wasn't, he had wanted to come out here in the middle many times, but without mama who could take him? If only this one wasn't so funny looking and crazy sort of. "No," he said. She made her little hissing noise and wriggled closer and then her frizzy head was leaning against his neck so it was a little tough to breathe. "Ummm, you're a nice one," she said softly. Morty stretched his neck and brought Dick Partridge up to his ear; he was beginning to get cramps from sitting so stiff, holding her weight against him. So then she whispered something he couldn't hear because of Dick's voice, but he said yeah anyway. Oh, she murmured into his neck and said something else that sounded like I do too, and before he could run away she was kissing him on the mouth, Aunt Ida's kiss, wet and sloppy. And she sure didn't use ice blue Micrin. There was nothing to do but hold perfectly still while she kept kissing and wheezing out of the teeny nose. Oh Morty, she said and Ah Morty and other things he couldn't make out with Dick Partridge talking in his ear. He put up with it all, but then she began to rub his chest and squeeze his muscle and he began to worry; his strength bunched up all at once and with a hard push he was free and there was sand between them. "Why—that?" she said.

"What?"

"—do that?"

"What?"

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"OH FOR GOD SAKE," she yelled, "TURN THAT THING OFF."

That wasn't so nice, the way it was said and the thing part, but he slid the volume down because she looked so funny. "Put it away, *please*," she said. So OK he tucked Baby into his pocket and she let out a deep breath. He sat very still with his legs crossed. She sat in her place. Finally she leaned back on her hands and cocked her head to one side and said "Morton, do you like it here?"

"Yeah. Yes."

"A lot?"

He looked at all the quiet and out to all the peaceful nothing, rocking gently like a bunch of ice blue Micrin. "Yes," he said.

"Would you like to come here in the summer and swim? And have fun?"

"Yes."

"I could take you in the water. You'd like that, wouldn't you?"

"Yes."

"And the amusement park. The loopdaloops and the carousel. I could take you there, too." Far away, over the sand, he remembered those things, things that had been asleep since mama had gone. "You *would* like that, wouldn't you?" she said.

"Yes." Oh what was her first name?... she smiled, all of a sudden not such a funny smile... "Yes, Leona."

"Well," she said, leaning way back, "if we're going together you have to get rid of that thing."

"What thing?" Again the flip flop.

"That radio."

His forehead wrinkled up. "What?"

"That radio, Morton. I don't want it around."

"Huh?"

"It's not good for you, Morton."

What kind of silliness? "Oh I can't do that."

"You can and you must."

"Oh no."

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"Yes, Morton."

"Oh no." He covered his pocket; Miss Mandell smiled and with a sudden twist leaned over and kissed him. "Can it do *that*?" she said in his ear. "Can it?" What a dumb question ... "No." Her lips nibbled his ear like Shotzie the mouse nibbling cheese under his bed. "All right then,"she whispered "it goes." She was dumb all right, she hadn't heard a thing. "Oh no," he said. Again she leaned against him and kissed him. Hard. With her mouth open, her tongue swishing through his teeth, pushing the bacteria into his throat. He jerked away. She leaned toward him and he bounced his seat away. "Morton," she said, "don't pull away." She crawled after him; again he bounced, kept on bouncing. "Morton, don't. *Don't.*" She caught up and her hand lashed out and into his pocket. She jumped up and waved her hand; high above him Baby and Dick Partridge flashed against the sky. "See, see," she said. "All right now, that's enough, we have had just about enough." Was she nuts or something, she should be in a nut house.... He scrambled up and lunged for her, the way he used to jump for his hat when the kids taunted him with saloogie. She ducked and he lunged again. "Morton," she yelled, "stop it, stop it. I told you it's not good for you. Morton, I won't have it. MORTON." He leaped again and she dodged away and ran around him in circles, tying him up with an invisible rope. He was dizzy and he stopped, panting, crouching on the sand, tears blurring his eyes. Please gimme it back Louie... Slowly she stopped spinning and stood before him; her mouth was wide open and strings of spit linked her teeth. "So you want it, hah," she gasped. "You really want this thing, hah Morton? All right, just look, Morton. Look careful." He recalled those awful words, what they always meant and the things that always followed and he crushed his eyes together. The white haze of sand and sky beat at his eyes and he blocked them out with his hands till the comforting blackness drove her face away. He hunched down perfectly still so maybe everything would disappear. Then he heard. Straight through Dick Partridge's voice. Bang, bang, bang, bang. It plucked his

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fingers apart, pushed his eyes open. He peeked out. She was smashing good old Dick's voice with her shoe, holding the little box against a rock so there was no escape. His eyes opened wide. As he stared, the box split and a piece flew against him. But the voice kept coming. "And now folks, Miss Connie Francis singing 'Come Back to Sorrento.' In Italian." And through the banging and the grunting lovely little Connie was on and singing. In Italian. Loud and clear over the sand and water. With no spit strings and no grunty breathing. But Miss Mandell only smashed harder, grunting and smashing, one piece after another flying off, until just the smallest piece was left, and *still* little Miss Connie Francis sang. Horrified, he watched the little piece that held her. SMASH. Silence, Miss Connie was gone. And Miss Mandell stood there, with the last little white piece in her hand. She looked at it with a smile and then reared back and threw it far out into the water. She brushed her hands together and walked over to Morty and Morty didn't move; he could only think how would he ever get back now, through the tunnel and under the river. "There," she said in a brand new voice, "that was all for your good." She knelt down beside him and stroked his face. "See sonny boy," she said, "I did it for you. Sweet little sonny." He looked at the brown and white pieces on the sand and felt her rough hand against his face, stroking gently, and he looked up for permission, which with a smile and a nod she granted. On his hands and knees he crawled to the little pieces that now looked so strange and picked them up and stared at them. He tried to think of what they meant, knowing exactly, but unable to form them into a single picture. Then from over the sand came the voice, low and concerned. "Throw them away, Morton." That voice he knew... A *person* you must be, Morton, a person, you *must*... and the concerned looks and rotten kids and special classes and millions of people swirling around. And that hand on his face... and *his* hand, busy, exploring under the water. Oh... Desperately he tried one last time to push the picture together to form West 88th Street and aloneness at barely after midnight, and Baby and Baby's guys and dolls, but all

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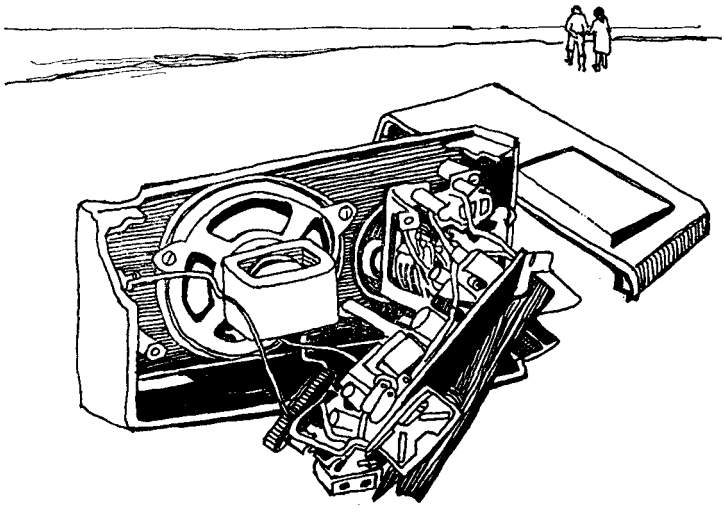
he could feel was people and hands and the rubbery softness under water. And the little secret idea that under her awful watery dress Miss Mandell could be rubbery soft...

"Morton, I'm *talking* to you."

Obediantly he raised his hand, now light and tingly, and flung the pieces into the water.

"That's a good boy," Miss Mandell said. She sat back with a contented look on her face. "*I'm* going to help you now," she said.



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DON'T SIT UNDER THE APPLE TREE WITH ANYONE ELSE BUT ME

"Don't bug me, Pa!" —Gregor Samsa

Created for whose sake? The praying
Mantis eats its mate. Hatched,
Two hundred or more eggs scramble
Away—(Breakfast for whom?)—eating
Each other. Among the outer leaves
Of plants; along flower stems;
Sometimes on branches; sometimes on walls;
Seen by some, yes, looking in windows—
They wait for lady beetles, they wait
For honeybees. I do not judge them.
Do not judge my poem! They are—
I am—both are what we are.
They can be kept (in separate cages)
As pets, and will take pieces of apple
(See *Genesis*, chapters 1–4)
From your fingers or sip water
From a spoon. With imagination.
(Familiarity?), there is little
One cannot love in heaven or earth.
After they know you well, they cock
Their little heads at your approach—
Asking, as I do, to be loved?

—ROBERT PACK

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WINTER TROUT

In the concrete cells of the hatchery
He nourished a dream of living
Under the ice, the long preparations
For the strange heat of feeling slowly

Roofs melt to a rhythmic green,
But now in the first cold of freedom,
Riding motionless under the road
Of ice, shaping the heart

Of the buried stream with his tail,
He knows that his powers come
From the fire and stillness of freezing.
With the small tremors of his form

The banks shift imperceptibly,
Shift back, tremble, settle,
Shift, all within utter stillness.
I keep in my quiver now

An arrow whose head is half-missing.
It is useless, but I will not change
The pulled, broken tooth of its head
For I have walked upon banks

Shaken with the watchfulness of trout
Like walking barefoot in sleep
On the swaying tips of a grainfield,
On the long, just-bending stems,

Almost weightless, able to leap
Great distances, yet not leaping
Because each step on that ground
Gave a new sense of limitless hope.

Under the ice the trout rode,
Trembling, in the mastered heart
Of the creek, with what he could do.
I set myself up as a statue

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With a bow, my red woolen back
Climbed slowly by thoughtful brambles
And beggar-lice, to shoot
At an angle down through the shadow

Of ice, and spear the trout
With a shot like Ulysses'
Through the ax-heads, with the great weapon.
I shot, and the trout did not move

But was gone, and the banks
Went rigid under my feet
As the arrow floated away
Under the paving of ice.

I froze my right hand to retrieve it
As a blessing or warning,
As a sign of the penalties
For breaking into closed worlds

Where the wary controllers lie
At the heart of their power,
A pure void of shadowy purpose
Where the gods live, attuning the world,

Laying plans for the first green
They ever have lived, to melt
The ice from their great crowns.
Their secret enemies break

Like statues, as the king rises slowly,
Keeping only the thinnest film
Of his element – imagination –
Before his eyes as he lifts

Into Spring, with the woods upside down
Balanced perfectly in all its leaves
And roots as he deeply has
All winter made provision for,

The surface full of gold flakes
Of the raw undersides of leaves,
And the thing seen right,
For once, that winter bought.

—JAMES DICKEY

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IDYLL

Washington Square, San Francisco

A door:
PER L'UNIVERSO
is what it says
above it.
You must approach
more nearly
(the statue
of Benjamin Franklin watching you)
before you see
La Gloria di Colui
che tutto muove
PER L'UNIVERSO
—leaning
along the lintel—
penetra e risplende
across this church
for Italian Catholics:
Dante
unscrolling in rhapsody.
Cool
the January sun,
that with an intensity
the presence of the sea
makes more exact,
chisels the verso with shade
and lays
on the grass
a deep and even
Californian green,
while a brilliance
throughout the square
flatters the meanness of its architecture.
Beyond
there is the flood
which skirts this pond
and tugs the ear
towards it: cars
thick on the gradients of the city

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shift sun and sound—
a constant ground-bass
to these provincialisms of the piazza
tasting still
of Lerici and Genova.
Here
as there
the old men sit
in a mingled odour
of cheroot and garlic
spitting;
they share serenity
with the cross-legged
Chinese adolescent
seated between them
reading, and whose look
wears the tranquillity of consciousness
forgotten in its object—
his book
bears for a title
SUCCESS
in spelling.
How
does one spell out this
che penetra e risplende
from square
into the hill-side alley-ways
around it, where
between tall houses
children of the Mediterranean
and Chinese element
mingle
their American voices?...
The dictionary
defines idyllium
as meaning
'a piece, descriptive
chiefly of rustic life';
we
are in town: here

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let it signify
        this poised quiescence, pause
                and possibility in which
the music of the generations
        binds into its skein
                the flowing instant,
while the winter sun
        pursues the shadow
                before a church
whose decoration
        is a quotation from *Paradiso*.

—CHARLES TOMLINSON

THIRTY-THREE

Piece by piece I seem
to re-enter the world: I first began

a small, fixed dot, I still can see
that old myself, a darkblue thumbtack

pushed into the scene,
a hard little head protruding

from the pointillist's buzz and bloom.
After a time the dot

begins to ooze. Certain heats
melt it.
        Now I was hurriedly

blurring into ranges
of burnt red, burning green,

whole biographies swam up and
swallowed me like Jonah—

Jonah! I was Wittgenstein,
Mary Wollstonecraft, the soul

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of Louis Jouvet, dead
in a blown-up photograph.

Till, wolfed almost to shreds,
I learned to make myself

unappetizing. Scaly as a dry bulb
thrown into a cellar

I used myself, let nothing use me.
Like being on a private dole,

sometimes more like cutting bricks in Egypt.
What life was there, was mine,

now and again to lay
one hand on a warm brick

and touch the sun's ghost
with economical joy.

Such much for those days. Soon
practise may make me middling-perfect, I'll

dare inhabit the world
trenchant in motion as an eel, solid

as a cabbage-head. I have invitations:
a curl of mist steams upward

from the fields, visible as my breath,
houses along a road stand waiting

like old women knitting, breathless
to tell their tales.

—ADRIENNNE RICH

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SONG OF THE WOUNDS

"Red as butchered beasts
Miracle-mongers end;
Sang the first wound
In the left hand.

"Yet Pilate's scroll proclaims him
King in this land;
Sang the second wound
In the right hand.

"Not a man any more,
A cold blind root;
Sang the third wound
In the left foot.

"Yet every cancelled seed
A laden stalk must shoot;
Sang the fourth wound
In the right foot.

"Sweet image of our guilt,
A girl and an apple;
Sang the fifth wound
Under the nipple.

"Pity our naked mother
Under the ravished bough;
Cried the stumbling chorus
Across his brow.

*

Three women waited.
The red wounds cried
Down the hungry wind
Till the Victim died.

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They could not know
How their bounty spread
Wine of the stars
And halcyon bread.

For free Jack Time,
Half angel, half brute
Dicing for shed rags
At the cross foot.

THE TWELVE PIERS OF HAMNAVOE

Those piers like huge stone feet
Stand in the ebb.

Twice a day
The god of shipwreck and creel,
A gull on his shoulder,
Turns from his whales and icebergs
To lay green blessing on them.

Or spreads his wounds around them
Threatening the nets,

Or like an old blind ghost
Folds them in love and lost voices.

—GEORGE MACKAY BROWN

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POEM FOR THE DRUNKARD PRESIDENT

"Today, after a battle, we marched back
to our old positions in a heavy rain. We
passed a drunk man asleep in the ditch.
It was General Grant."
– from the letter of a Union soldier

Bracelets, jade, rubies, teak, silver chain armlets,
Topaz, smoking sapphire, diamond tortoises of gold,
Columbus glimpsed them behind the green hills before he died;
He died in chains in a dungeon, growling like a dog.
De Soto, misled by the Indians in Kansas, looking
For the Seven Cities of Cibola,
Was buried at night beneath the Mississippi;
Now we are buried at night beneath the world.

Little Crow died with skunk-fur bands on his broken wrists;
A few died like him, dancing
In Texas on high scaffolds, or burned to death;
Hat Sutton died in Great Neck on a rope,
And Black Jack tossed his life down, "Chosen for hell";
MacKenzie broke up on the Labrador rocks;
They turned back to the sea in ambushes, in dance halls,
With cow skulls in the Snake River snows—

A sea where harsh and sweet is the same thing is where
These harsh men died, not in thrift and hope.
We all live in that sea, like a fish.
A fish is surrounded by water on all sides.
We live in the sea; a water where life is spent.
The sea-men know: the kept life is the lost life!
It is still true! What moves us in our tents?
The spectacle of Grant, lying drunk, in the rain.

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LOOKING BACKWARD

If we go back, if we walk into the old darkness,
And find Washington brooding under the long bridges,
We will find the dead still ablaze in the anguish of the egg,
The screams of Indians echoing in the compression chambers
of shells,
Or disappearing into the tunnels of flashlights,
Mexicans falling, and soap buried alive.

Strange sugarbeets are living deep in the history books,
Sugarbeets that give blood, stones

That migrate, leaving cries among the stars,
Frozen ward-heelers crawling in the icy gutters.
To say our history is liberty after liberty is a lie:
We have a history of horse-beaters with red moustaches
Knocked down by a horse and bitten.

We have a history of a wife howling at a husband
To buy more, and buy more land, later
Rationing him to a pint of whiskey and five cigars a day;
Of land pyramided with mortgages and lost,
Of a dark fire burning soddenly in the finger tips,
Fingers that turn over deeds, fingers on fire,
Fingers that would light the sky if lifted at night.

—ROBERT BLY

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THE IMAGINATIVE LIFE

Evasive souls, of whom the wise lose track,
Die in each night, who, with their day-tongues, sift
The waking-taste of manna or of blood:

The raw magi, half-barbarians,
Entranced by demons and desert-frost,
By the irregular visions of a god,

Suffragans of the true seraphs. Lust
Writhes, is dumb savage and in their way
As a virulence natural to the earth.

Renewed glories batten on the poor bones;
Gargantuan mercies whetted by a scent
Of mortal sweat: as though the sleeping flesh

Adored by Furies, stirred, yawned, were driven
In mid-terror to purging and delight.
As though the dead had *Finis* on their brows.

HISTORY AS POETRY

Nothing will come of nothing: speak again

Poetry as salutation; taste
Of Pentecost's ashen feast. Blue wounds.
The tongue's atrocities. Poetry
Unearths from among the speechless dead

Lazarus mystified, common man
Of death. The lily rears its gouged face
From the provided loam. Accomplished
Auguries: bleatings; tarred gold of dung;

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Glittering instruments; sober priests
Who now beyond danger memorize
The names in error and justice drawn
From oblivion, blood-embroiled souls...

"An achievement" as they say. The old
Laurels wagging with the new: Selah!
Thus laudable the silent bone thus
Unanswerable the knack of tongues.

A PRAYER TO THE SUN
(i.m. Miguel Hernandez)

(1)
Darkness
above all things
the Sun
makes
rise

(2)
Vultures
salute their meat
at noon
(Hell is
silent)

(3)
Blind Sun
our ravager
bless us
so that
we sleep.

(Miguel Hernandez, poet of the Spanish Civil War, died in prison in 1942)

—GEOFFREY HILL

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FROM A SERIES

Division, mother of pain,

Look at you bringing
Your children up just as formerly
And look at me back again
In this former life,
You've all grown but I haven't.

You might as well ask me why
I come back to a month
Alright
Why do I and when I think
There used to be eleven others
At one time as they say and those
Other days in the week
I see the posters have changed
But the day's the same and even
When it was here hope would wait
Out in the garden rocking the grave
Now she's dead too and that's a blessing.

Just the same it was nice the way
You had them trained
And as for me it was nice
The way I used to be able
To forget between
The last Time I learned and the next time;
The way I loved
The east and the west my horses;
It had its points, if only
I could have been one at a time.

How long

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Can the hands of the clock go on drowning
Without my helping
One way or the other,
How long
Before freedom looms in front of me
And the door falls in on my tongue?

TO WHERE WE ARE

With open arms the water runs in to the wheel.

I come back to where I have never been.
You arrive to join me.
We have the date in our hands.

We come on to where we are, laughing to think
Of the Simplicities in their shapeless hats
With a door so they can sit outside it

I hope I may say
Our neighbors

Natives of now, creatures of
One song,
Their first, their last,

Listen.

MARICA LART

Now
We do not even know
What to wish for you

Oh sleep rocked
In an empty hand.

—W. S. MERWIN

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YOU COULD SAY

Yesterday rain fell in torrents,
stripping the branches of leaves and
deepening the arroyo. Now,
although the sun glances like flint
at the edges of cars, houses,
antennas, the water remains.
It lies in the hollows of rocks
and in lakes on the roads. Last night
it signalled a great change; today
winter breathes at my window, and
a few last flies, stunned by cold
into fearlessness, nestle close
to my skin. Summer is burnt out.
Why does this season, with its joy
in killing and its hard iron breath,
always find me alone? You could say
but you won't, and I am slowly
drifting away, I am growing
oblique like the sun, striking out
feebly at what is gone.
My love,
it was my nature to want you,
lascivious, aloof, a body
fresh as new-fallen snow, and as
cold. Like other men in my
desire, I asked for it and now
I have it—the wind, the black trees,
scum of ice on the roadside pools—
all that the rain promised, and more.

—ROBERT MEZEY

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Louis de Wet

A PORTFOLIO

and an Interview

presented by Charles Fox

Louis de Wet, a 33-year-old painter from South Africa, of Dutch-Flemish origin, came to Europe in 1953. He lived in Paris for some years before finding a large studio-house in Campden Hill, London.

F. Your work is modern but it isn't in what I would call a conventionally modern style.

deW. In Paris I realized one day that I just couldn't go on painting the way everybody around me was painting. They suffered from an inability to draw and paint the objects, the things which moved them: the women, the beauty of women's flesh, of stuffs, metals, flowers and butterflies. I felt that if textures, matières, patinas, surfaces, marks, lines and shapes and circles have to do with our experience—as modern art protagonists claim—then so have the appearances of things. That is, these circles and lines and patinas and shapes occur on objects and things you recognize. Such recognizable objects must penetrate to even the deepest levels of our experience. But I had to

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be able to draw them. This had something to do with the envy, the sad sort of admiration I felt when I looked at the work of people like Dürer, like Corot. The ability of Grünewald in paint to depict, for instance, the rose in the Issenheimer altar-piece, in Colmar. The ethereal, visionary quality of the rose glowing behind the Madonna doesn't take away from the fact that it is very much an ordinary rose too. I think that's part of the vision: that it's so much a flower we *know*, transformed. It's not some object badly drawn which is supposed to be a transformed rose.

F. You mean it's the symbol and the real thing at the same time?

deW. Yes, and to be a symbol it has to be the real thing.

F. I think it's fair to say that most of your pictures seem absorbed with death, or with the way flesh gets warped by time.

deW. This is terribly important to me. Deeply, deeply important. This consciousness of death coming... But not so much death, you know. Dying. Quite close to Paris there's a small mediaeval church, La Ferté Loupière, which has a Danse Macabre on its walls. Now the Danse Macabre arose when the idea that Paradise was going to follow death was disappearing from Europe. Men began to realize they would die. You feel this in François Villon. You see it in the Danse Macabre of Holbein. Well, inside this church, underneath these rather crude drawings, some mediaeval person has written some poetry. One of the lines I'll never forget: *Quant mourir fault, c'est grant contrainte*. Which means, more or less, "When it is necessary to die, it is a great restriction." And I notice that everywhere. The hours a woman spends in front of the mirror, trying to hold death at bay. The time we take to clean ourselves, to rid ourselves of the dead matter that our bodies secrete, the horror we have for the hair that comes out, for the paunch that develops, for the decaying strength. There is a fantastic *nostalgie de la jeunesse* today, and for the things related to it: the sun, the Côte d'Azur, the guitar, things which are spontaneous and young; and for young habits—Einstein eating ice-cream... It comes into art. I want to paint a painting one day—each thing I do, drawing or painting, tries to do this—which will lock the spectator in a gaze, like Medusa, and turn him to stone for the instant he looks at it, so that he is no longer conscious of time passing, so that for the time he looks at it he is not dying. That's what I want.

F. This involves concealing the scaffolding of your work, doesn't it? I mean there's a lot of painting today in which the becoming of the painting is as important as the thing it becomes. Your drawings or paintings seem to me to be opposed to this.

deW. Yes, so much in painting today has the quality of getting *between* the spectator and what he is looking at. What I called the Medusa-like grip of the painting is somehow destroyed by usual techniques: the over-thick paint, the inadequacies of drawing. A

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painting must transcend its means, so that it becomes the thing it portrays. And I don't mean superficial description—.

F. Photographic?

deW. No. This drawing, for instance *(No. 2 in portfolio)* can't be said to be photographic. Yet it comes across alive, I feel, not just as drawing.

F. Yes. So to get this kind of life into your work you had to start all over again, in the early Paris days. And you began to draw rather than paint. Was this a deliberate search for austerity? And were you trying to perfect that technique before moving on to painting again?

deW. Yes. But at the same time I did something less obvious, in terms of finished results: I undertook a study of mediaeval Flemish techniques and a study of the quality and nature of pigments and varnishes. I have written a book on technique, pigments and media. It more or less traces my attempt to teach myself what art schools no longer teach.

F. This use of Flemish techniques—are you trying to involve the spectator in your vision, to lead him in as Bosch does?

deW. Well, Bosch's vision isn't *ordinary* enough for the extraordinary to have the kind of value I like. Like Cranach's or Breughel's. To be a symbol it has to be a real thing. Cranach, for instance, reveals the mysterious, smiling, enigmatic side of women. And the ordinariness of their beauty is wonderful. None of the women is an ideal type, none is excessively beautiful or excessively ugly. Yet just because they're ordinary they're terribly attractive.

F. Cranach's Venus seems a very unidealized creature. She looks as if she'd just taken her corsets off.

deW. Exactly. That's it. I'm looking for the kind of ordinariness Cranach achieved. Breughel too. It's the details, the relating of objects in Breughel which moves me: the birds in the fog, seen through mist, sitting on branches; the thistle blown by the wind unobserved by people rushing past to the Crucifixion. The care he takes with detail is extraordinary. You also get it in a book like *L'Histoire d'O*—.

F. Yes, you said someone illustrated it—.

deW. Leonor Fini. But her illustrations don't have much to do with the book. I mean, you could say a tea-pot was round, and be wrong—because it's oval, but at least your remark would bear some relation to the tea-pot's shape. Or you could say it was brown when really it's orange, and still make sense. But if you said that tea-pot was square and purple, it'd be a very different matter. That's what Fini's done. *L'Histoire d'O* is as concretely evoked as one of Colette's interiors, as illustrateable as a description by Malaparte. *L'Histoire d'O* has a tremendous respect for the appearance of a woman, of a room. But those illustrations! You see splotches of paint, phalluses like seaweed, people reduced to phantasmagoria.

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F. What ideas... what projects have you got for the future?
deW. It's the way that women—beautiful, attractive, yet ordinary, and *different* from one another—relate to the skeleton, to dying, that interests me. In their temporary beauty they achieve a transient, poignant victory for a while. Also, the compassion, and the severity and tenderness and masculine authority in some ageing men. Another temporary victory. I'd like to do the Dance of Death, with lovely young women and men who are ageing but have somehow won dignity in the process... with juke-boxes, missiles, aeroplanes, those wonderful objects women use to make up with, animals, everything—great, vast Dances of Death, beautifully painted, and full of the excitement you get from modern music, from "shake" music, music with a bite. Do you know *Night Train?*
F. I know Jimmy Forrest's *Night Train.*
deW. I mean the record by James Brown and the Famous Flames. It's the immediacy, the terrible excitement in the dance, that overwhelms me. It links up with the Danse Macabre. I forget myself in the dance, it takes me completely out of a feeling of dying. When I watch good dancing I get cold in the cheeks. It's weird.
F. I wonder if the dance always does this. Remember the dancing pilgrimages across Europe during the plague-years. Perhaps it's the vivacity, the animation, quickness opposed to the dead.
deW. I find in the dance something cold and strange, accurate and passionate, yet cold. What I love is Negro dancing, Swahili dancing, Caribbean dancing. You can't describe it in words. Perhaps you could in drawing, in painting. I'll never forget one night at 'The Roaring Twenties'. I was watching a Negro dancing all by himself. He was as high, well as high as anything. I turned to another man, and said, "That's crazy". He was dancing away so beautifully. Well, this man, this Negro I spoke to, looked at me for a long time, so long I thought I'd said the wrong thing. But then he said, "It's *the* thing, man, he dance *the* thing, he dance *the* thing." Like a private incantation, his voice sort of rigid and away. He was deeply moved, almost permanently moved, certainly very high—and separate from dying.

The portfolio comprises the following drawings:

1. Girl beckoning and calling
2. Head
3. Men, women and birds under scythe
4. Monique with skull and rose.
5. Head in oval frame
6. Crowd scene with skull head
7. Two heads, with hands in contact
8. Army officer with cap
9. Two women dancing
10. Portrait of a vampire
11. Man with woman's body, and woman with man's body, surrounded by objects
12. Portrait of the artist at two ages.

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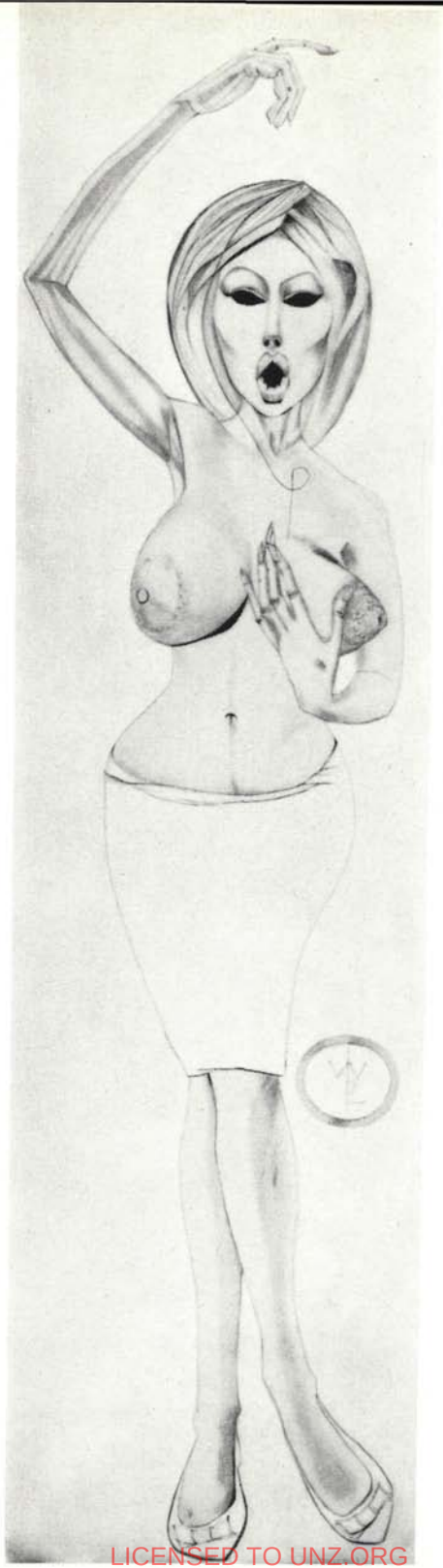

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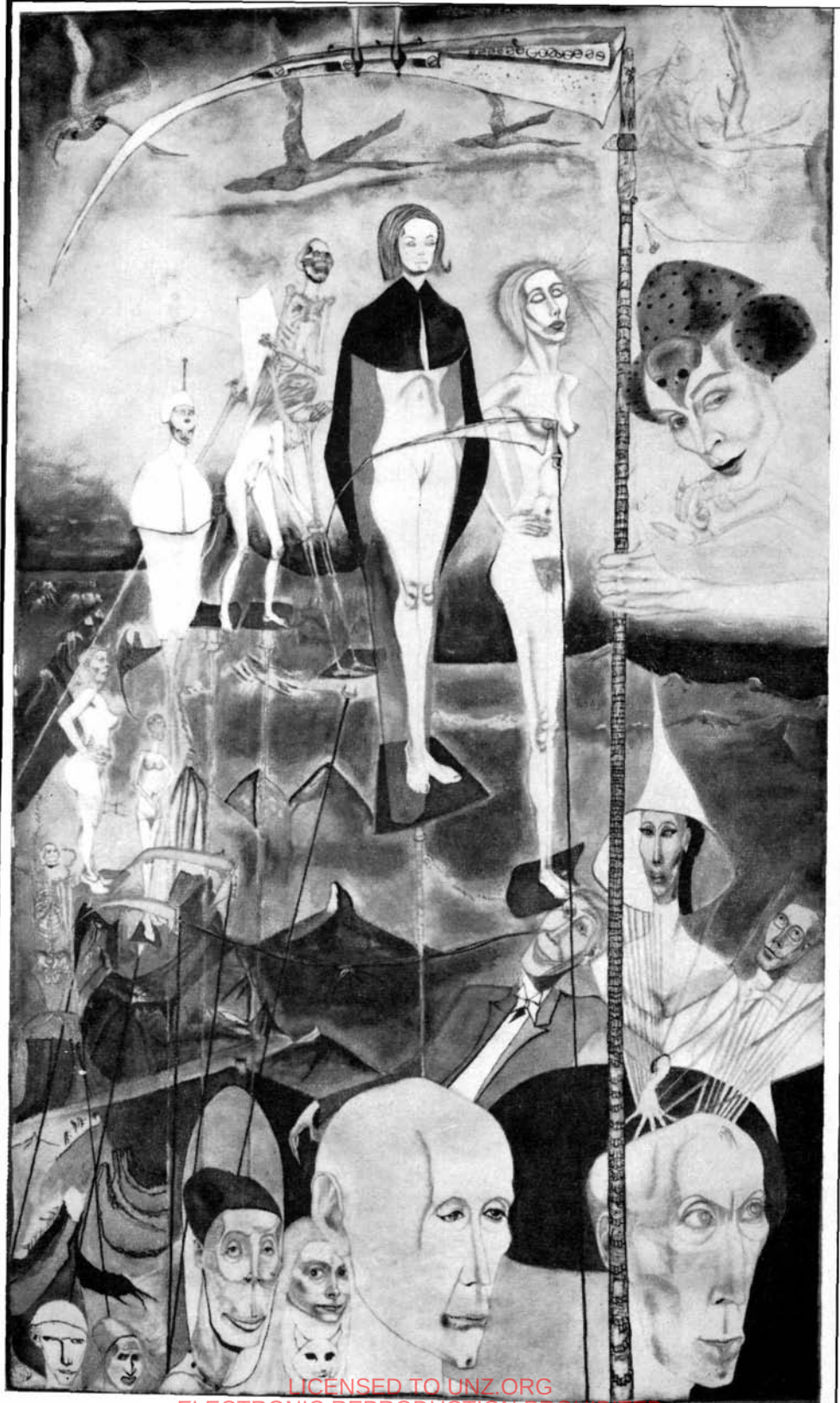

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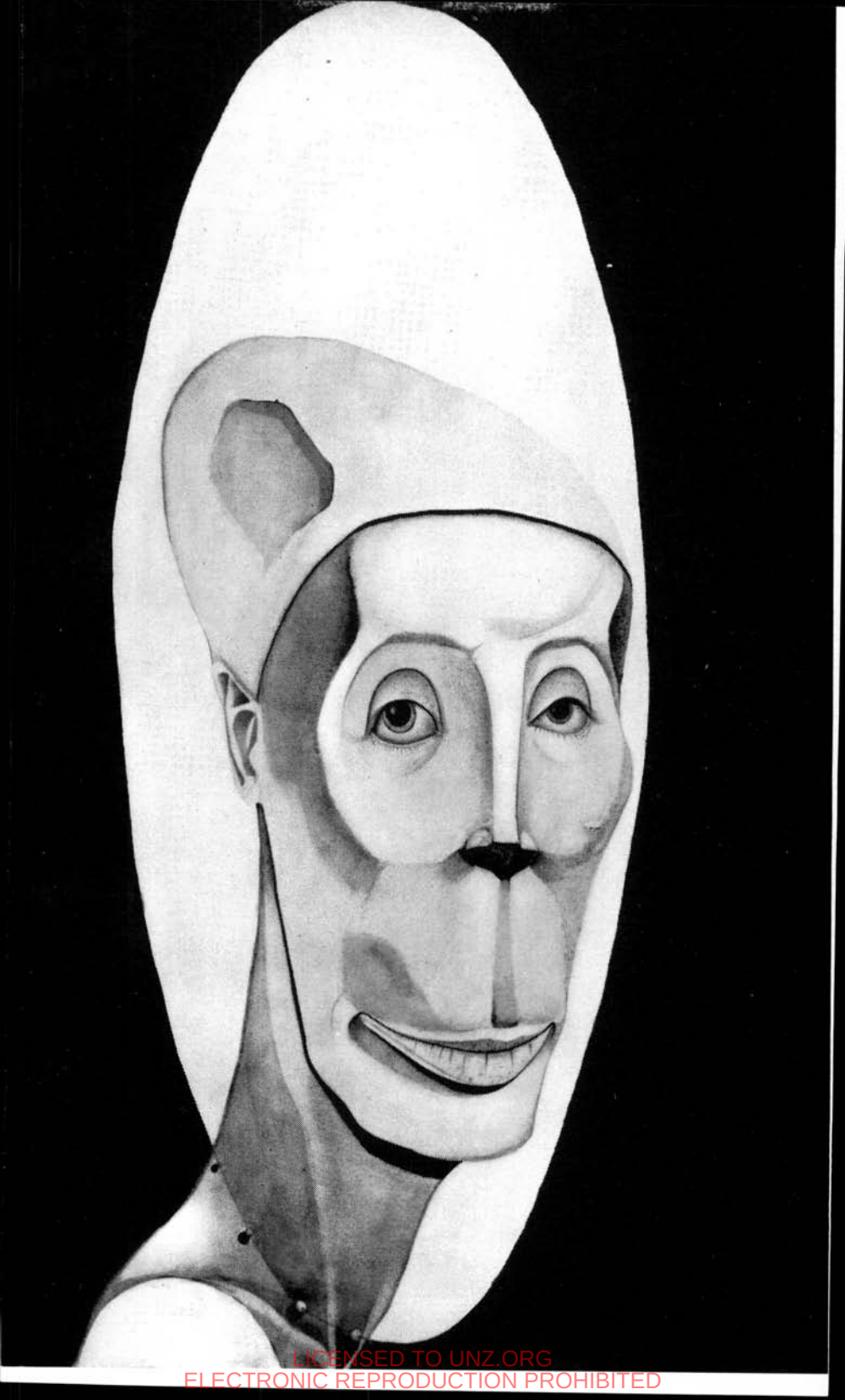

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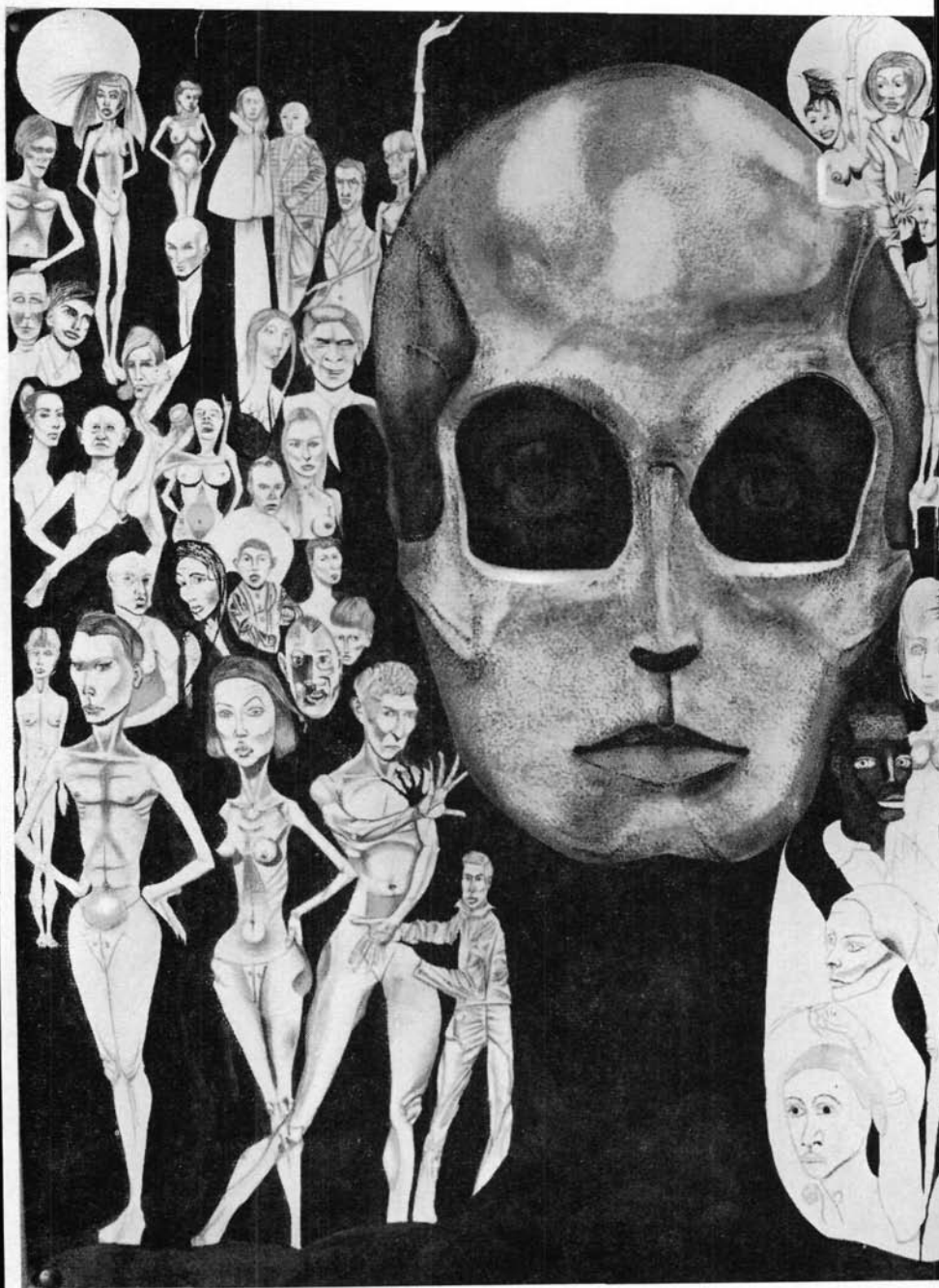

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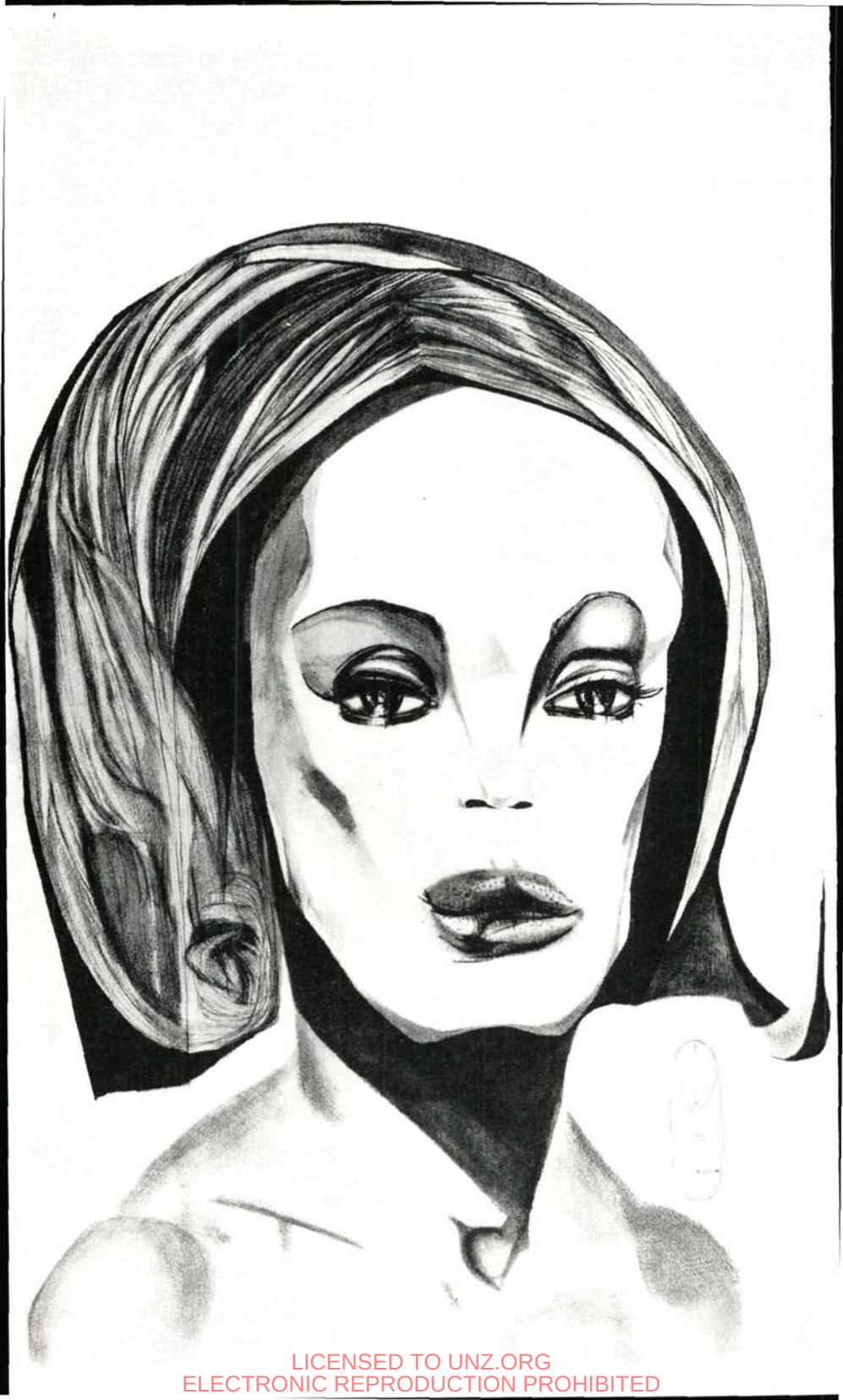

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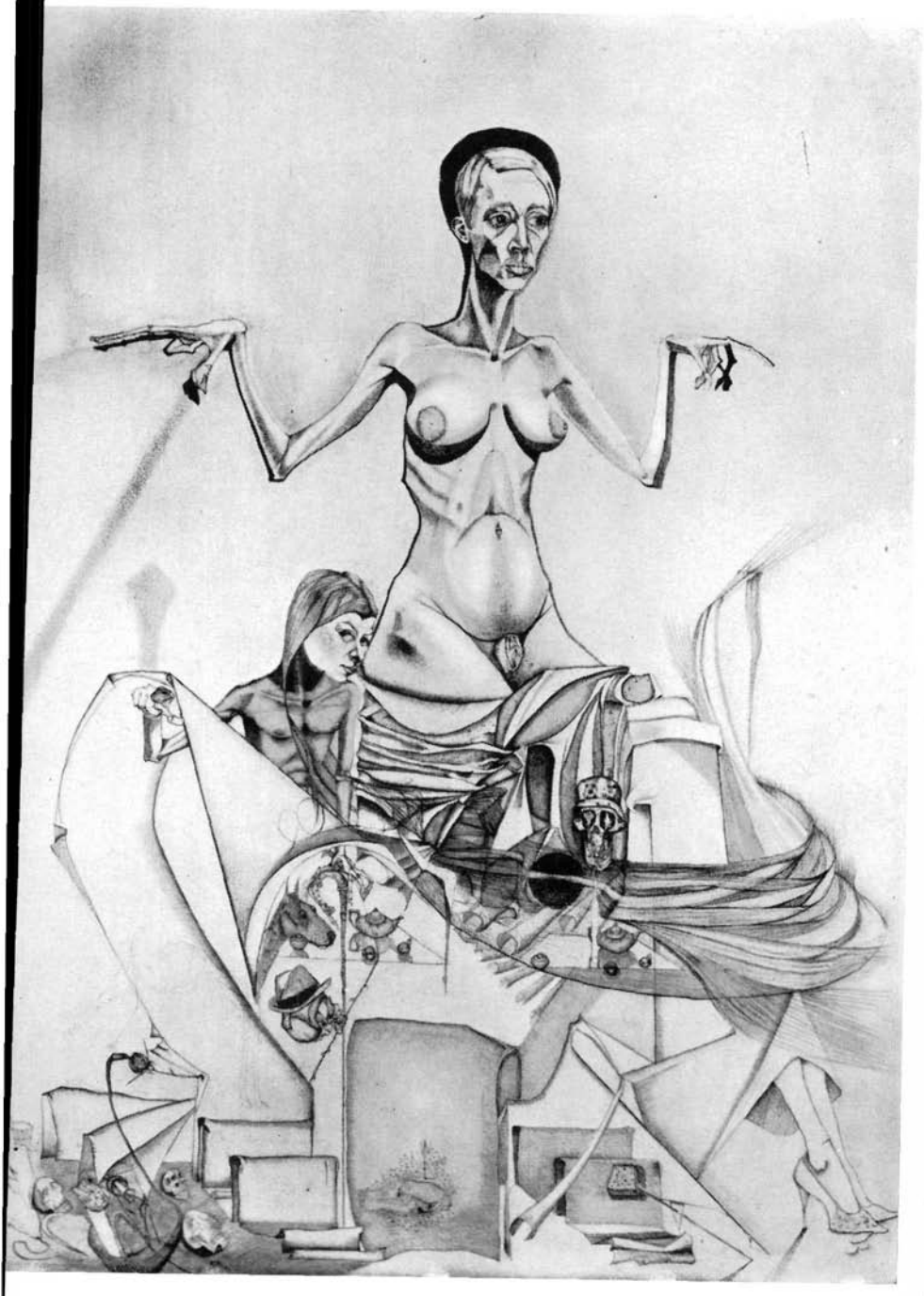

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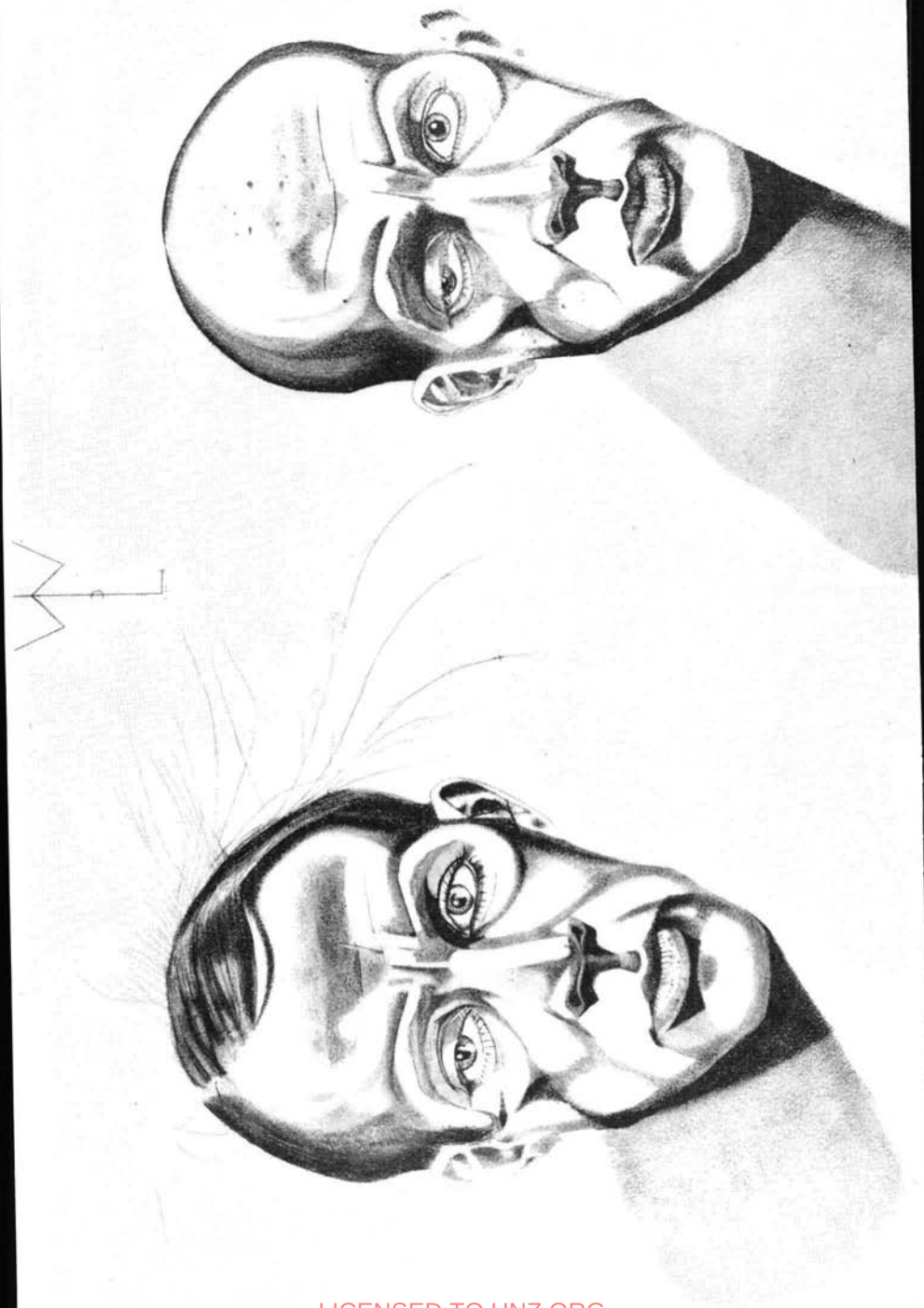

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THE BLUE-EYED PRECINCT WORKER

Liberal, blue-eyed, shivering, trying not
to look like a bill
collector or detective,
I move through the slums in a drizzle—
the slums of Pasadena, where—nutmeg, bronze,
and purple—the Negroes live.

They look out and laugh—Mrs. Bessie Simpson,
Miss Delilah Jones.
the eleven Tollivers.
They are extras in a bad movie
starring no one they have ever seen before,
no one that they care to know.

I am like a man rich in the currency
of a lost kingdom,
for this both is and is not
what I sought. Somewhere, a screen door bangs
and bangs, but in the half-light I can't see where,
or give the sound direction.

A black and white sausage of a mongrel bitch
follows me, sniffing;
her obscene stump of a tail
motionless. We go, the two of us,
to the muddy edge of the dark arroyo.
The street light blooms overhead;

Our shadows burst forth, monstrous and alien.
There, on the far rim,
are the houses of the rich.
It is the dinner hour, and they eat
prime rib of unicorn or breast of phoenix.
It is another precinct.

Oddly enough, I am consoled by the thought
of the delicate
small animals that move down
through the arroyo: white coyote,
masked coon, and the plumed skunk. Come, Citizen Dog,
we have chosen the short straw.

—HENRI COULETTE

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SLEEPING

The avenue rises toward a city of white marble.
I am not meeting anyone. The capitol is empty.
I enter the dome of sleep.

. . .

I was lying on the sofa to rest, to sleep
a few minutes, perhaps.
I felt my body sag into the hole of sleep.
All at once I was awake and frightened.
My own death was drifting near me
in the middle of life. The strong body
blurred and diminished into the dark waters.
The flesh floated away.

. . .

The shadow is a tight passage
that no one will be spared
who goes down
to the deep well.
In sleep, something remembers.
Three times since I woke
from the first sleep,
it has drunk that water.
Awake, it is still sleeping.

—DONALD HALL

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THE HUSBAND AS HERO

I

I'm drunk. My head holds up
the soft vibrations of the room.
Dusk. My daughter jogs her answer
to what question? Coffee, yes. I sip
toward soberness, and stiffen where her
six years ask me truth. I am
her father, due to speak the single
thing I know. I hear my ignorance say
"Your growing meets a certain angle
of the sun." This is the truth. Today.

II

Back from my nightmare night, I wake
sweating and wet. Back from resistance,
where I lay broken but would not break,
I rise from a Maquis underground, and doze
toward breakfast. Phoebes muddle the sun
and whistle in light from some middle distance.
A hero should have a wench. I wait,
touched by hope, and hope to rise
in my image, arrived heroically late,
but potent as dreams. The children shake
me to struggle out of a hero's life.
From the bathroom, I hear them fight for a pancake,
and I enter Sunday (the day begins
to begin), stirred by my weekday wife.

—PHILIP BOOTH

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LIEDCHEN

We started early, took some pictures
  (A red bow in your hair);
And there were waterfalls on mountains
  High in the sunlit air,
And villages with wooden statues
  In every little square;
A village idiot howled with mirth
  At such a gawky pair.
Then all at once the distance faded
  (Night comes quickly there);
I looked as far as I could and saw
  A red bow in your hair.

— DONALD PETERSEN

LEINBACH'S PROOF

But if, after so many droning days,
You try to imagine a quiet country
Under the soft crush of the tide,
You'll be deceived.
Leinbach discovered death does not exist.
At the last moment, when the undertow
Holds, and a pink foam
Bubbles inside your throat: when you are dragged and
swirled

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In a tight spiral, you will remember
A restless summer in Montclair,
Sunlight dying in a room,
The salty taste of damp arms and legs
And dry tears, words
Impossible to change
After a lifetime of dishonesty.
And this remembered life must have its own
Last moment which will be
Remembered, so that from last to last
As Leinbach showed you can approach death
But never reach it, never rest
Though you drown endlessly, never forget.
Things that are lost forever, never escape.

THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL

Cold, cold ...
In the end it began to snow
Mercifully, like bandages
Streaming down from hospital windows.
And you were repaired
By that soft covering.
No more the icy cautery
Searching the corners of an eye,
Or the needles of want. To be
Dead, you know what it means
Dear invalid: if you strike a match
The sinews burn
With agonizing heat
And fade: comfort begins with that.

—ROBERT LAYZER

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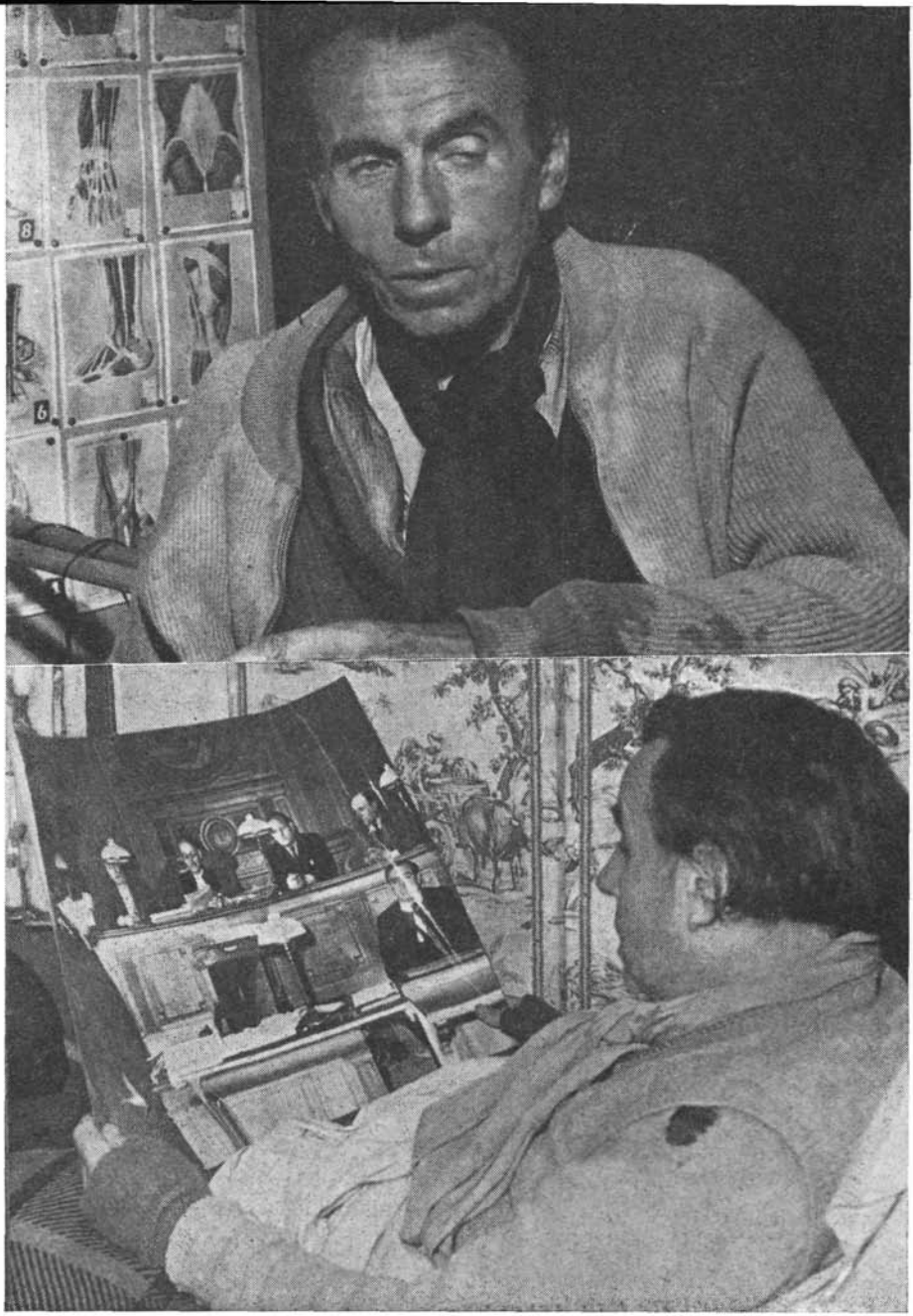

Top: Céline in Meudon, France, 1960.
Below: Denmark, 1959, internment camp: Céline with report of his own 'in absentia' trial, in Paris. *Photos Michel Bernard*

Thanks are due to Dominique de Roux & associate editors of Cahiers L'HERNE, Paris, for co-operation in preparing the Celine portfolio and for permission to translate and reprint material hitherto unpublished in English. (cf. L'Herne, No. 3: Louis-Ferdinand Celine. This volume also contains the first attempt at a complete bibliography).

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Louis Ferdinand Céline

a batch of new mss

Louis-Ferdinand Céline was born and died near Paris (May 27, 1894-July 1, 1961). Of his books and pamphlets, some eighteen appeared in his lifetime, some six remained unpublished. His principal works were 'Journey to the End of Night' (1932), 'Death on the Instalment Plan' (1936) and One Chateau from Another (1957).

His books often seemed case histories of himself. His World War One wounds, which caused him lifelong suffering, both physical and neurological, were a primary theme in his work.

Céline was the pen-name of Dr Louis Destouches, son of a clerk and a lace seamstress. After World War One, he swiftly earned his medical degree – in three years. He worked with clinics in France, Africa and America, and for the Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford factory, Detroit – for whom he wrote a sociological study, 'La Medicine Chez Ford'.

He was twice married (to Edith Follet, 1917-1924, to Lucette Almanzor, 1939-1961), and once refused – by Elizabeth Craig, in 1932.

He lived partly on royalties from his books and partly on fees from his patients, most of whom, however, were too poor to pay.

Céline's published works became best-sellers. He had a characteristic flair for titles: 'Ballet without Music, without People, without Anything;' 'The School for Corpses'; 'Fantasy for Another Day.

Céline's special contribution to French literature was to have written the language he spoke, unobstructed by academic consideration, the argot of the streets.

—JAMES SHERWOOD

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Facsimile of letter from Jack Kerouac on Céline

Louis Ferdinand Céline was a general practicioner in the poor quarters of Paris. He was also highly sensitive and actually a kindly doctor according to my instinct as I read his angry accounts of the senseless suffering of some of his clientele. The sweet little boy coughing to death...the beautiful young girl bleeding to death...the old landladies long dead. Reading "Voyage au bout d'la nuit" was to me like seeing the greatest French movie ever made, a super heavenly "Quai des brumes" a thousand times sadder than Jean Gabin's bitter lip or Michel Simon's lugubrious lechery or the carnival where lovers cry...

It seemed to me that Céline was actually the most compassionate French writer of his time. He himself said (in 1950) (in a newspaper interview in Paris) that there were only two real writers in France at the time, himself and Jean Genêt. He dismissed Genêt half-jokingly for the obvious reason known to us all. Yet he was wise enough to recognize Genêt. I feel that Genêt completed the tragedy of the French Queer Underworld for Balzac, but in Rimbaud's terms, or rather under Rimbaud's terms, and under Villon's critical eye (as Baudelaire watches from a distant balcony). This investigation was something portly Bourgeois master Balzac could never have dared to undertake. And the prose of Genêt is every bit as angelic, from the street, as the prose of Proust was angelic from the upper apartment. And I say Céline was right about Genêt.

But Céline himself, his sources came from further back in French literature: he came from Rabelais, he even came on through from the virile Hugo. It always seemed to me that Robinson of "Voyage" was being pursued by a Shroudy Javert, and that Javert was Céline himself, and Céline himself was Robinson, and therefore "Voyage" is the story of the Shroud of Céline's self pursuing the Shroud of Céline's non-self, Robinson. I can't see how people could accuse Céline of vitriolic malice if they'd ever read the chapter on the young whore in Detroit, or the agonized priest climbing in through the window in "Mort à credit," or that marvelous inventor in the same story.

I say he was a writer of great, supremely great charm and intelligence and no one compares to him. He is the main influence on the writing of Henry Miller, by the way, that modern flamboyant tone of knocking the chip off the shoulder of horror, that sincere agony, that redeeming shrug and laugh. He even made Trotsky laugh and cry. The political crisis of our times is no more important than the Turkish crisis of 1822, when William Blake was writing about the Lamb. In the long run, men will only remember the Lamb. Camus would had have us turn literature into mere propaganda, with his "commitment" talk. I only remember Robinson...I only remember the Doctor micturating in the Seine at dawn...Myself, I'm only an ex-sailor, I have no politics, I dont even vote.

Adieu, pauvre souffrant, mon docteur.

Jack Kerouac

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Collecting material on Céline for L'HERNE, *Miss Lucia Evans wrote to Henry Miller & Jack Kerouac (who responded handsomely, with the letter reproduced opposite). Henry Miller, courteous as ever, sent the following reply; while apparently declining, it is relevant both to Céline & to Miller's own work.*

from Percha-bei-Starnberg, Germany
October 1st 1963

Dear Miss Evans,

The trouble is I can't collect myself enough to write anything worth while when traveling—and I have been doing a lot of traveling these past few months. All I can suggest is to use something I have already written on Celine. Maybe New Directions could help you there—or if not, Mr Thomas Moore, secy. of the "Henry Miller Literary Society"—121 North 7th St. Minneapolis (3) Minnesota. He has just recently been thru *all* my books. I myself never know where anything is. I adored Celine's writings and owe him much. But I don't feel too bad about not offering something for these "post-mortems". I did what I could for him when he was alive. Now that he is dead, what matter all these words? People say—for the living. Those who would be drawn to his work will be, whether he is now eulogized or not. Don't you agree? (I suppose you don't.) Somehow it all makes me think of funerals, of standing by the grave and throwing flowers into the empty hole. Something I could never do. In fact, I never go to funerals or weddings.

Forgive this long explanation. Celine lives in me still, always will. That is what is important.

Sincerely,

Henry Miller

P.S. Am off again tomorrow for parts unknown.

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Places People Never Go

An interview

with

L-F. Céline

THE ART OF FICTION XXXIII

INTERVIEWERS

Do you remember having had a shock, a literary explosion,which marked you?

CELINE

O, never, no! Me, I started in medicine and I wanted medicine and certainly not literature. Jesus Christ no! If there are any people who seem to me gifted, I've seen it in—always the same—Paul Morand, Ramuz, Barbusse, the guys who were made for it.

INTERVIEWERS

In your childhood you didn't think you'd be a writer?

CELINE

O, not at all, O, no, no, no. I had an enormous admiration for doctors. O, that seemed extraordinary, that did. Medicine was my passion.

INTERVIEWERS

In your childhood, what did a doctor represent?

CELINE

Just a fellow who came to the Passage Choiseul to see my sick mother, my father. I saw a miraculous guy, I did, who cured, who did surprising things to a body which didn't feel like working. I found that terrific. He looked very wise. I found it absolutely magical.

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INTERVIEWERS

And today, what does a doctor represent for you?

CELINE

Bah! Now he's so mistreated by society he has competition from everybody, he has no more prestige, no more prestige. Since he's dressed up like a gas station attendant, well, bit by bit, he becomes a gas station attendant. Eh? He doesn't have much to say any more, the housewife has Larousse Medical, and then diseases themselves have lost their prestige, there are fewer of them, so look what's happened: no syph, no gonorrhea, no typhoid. Antibiotics have taken a lot of the tragedy out of medicine. So there's no more plague, no more cholera.

INTERVIEWERS

And the nervous, mental diseases, are there more of those instead?

CELINE

Well, there we can't do anything at all. Some madnesses kill, but not many. But as for the half-mad, Paris is full of them. There's a natural need to look for excitement, but obviously all the bottoms you see around town inflame the sex drive to a degree... drive the teen-agers nuts, eh?

INTERVIEWERS

When you were working at Ford's, did you have the impression that the way of life imposed on people who worked there risked aggravating mental disturbances?

CELINE

O, not at all. No. I had a chief doctor at Ford's who used to say, "They say chimpanzees pick cotton. I say it'd be better to see some working on the machines." The sick are preferable, they're much more attached to the factory than the healthy, the healthy are always quitting, whereas the sick stay at the job very well. But the human problem, now, is not medicine. It's mainly women who consult doctors. Woman is very troubled, because clearly she has every kind of known weakness. She needs... she wants to stay young. She has her menopause, her periods, the whole genital business, which is very delicate, it makes a martyr out of her, doesn't it, so this martyr lives anyway, she bleeds, she doesn't bleed, she goes and gets the doctor, she has operations, she doesn't have operations, she gets re-operated, then in between she gives birth, she loses her shape, all that's import-

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ant. She wants to stay young, keep her figure, well. She doesn't want to do a thing and she can't do a thing. She hasn't any muscle. It's an immense problem... hardly recognized. It supports the beauty parlors, the quacks and the druggists. But it doesn't present an interesting medical situation, woman's decline. It's obviously a fading rose, you can't say it's a medical problem, or an agricultural problem. In a garden, when you see a rose fade, you accept it. Another one will bloom. Whereas in woman, she doesn't want to die. That's the hard part.

INTERVIEWERS

Your profession as a doctor brought you a certain number of revelations and experiences you passed on in your books.

CELINE

O yes, O yes, I spent thirty-five years doctoring, so it does count a bit. I ran around a lot in my youth. We climbed a lot of stairs, saw a lot of people. It helped me a lot in all ways, I must say. Yes, enormously. But I didn't write any medical novels, that's an abominable bore... like Soubiran.

INTERVIEWERS

You got your medical calling very early in life, and yet you started out entirely differently.

CELINE

O, yes. And how! They wanted to make a buyer out of me. A department store salesman! We didn't have anything, my parents didn't have the means, don't you see. I started in poverty, and that's how I'm finishing.

INTERVIEWERS

What was life like for small businesses around 1900?

CELINE

Fierce, Fierce. In the sense that we hardly had enough to eat, and you had to keep up appearances. For example, we had two shopfronts in the Passage Choiseul, but there was always only one lit up because the other was empty. And you had to wash the passage before going to work. My father. That was no joke. Well. My mother had earrings. We always took them to the pawn-shop at the end of the month, to pay the gas-bill. O no, it was awful.

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INTERVIEWERS

Did you live a long time in the Passage Choiseul?

CELINE

Well, eighteen years. Until I joined up. It was extreme poverty. Tougher than poverty, because in poverty you can let yourself go, degenerate, get drunk, but this was poverty which keeps up, dignified poverty. It was terrible. All my life I ate noodles. Because my mother used to repair old lacework. And one thing about old lace is that odors stick to it forever. And you can't deliver smelly lace! So what didn't smell? Noodles. I've eaten basinsful of noodles. My mother made noodles by the basinful. Boiled noodles, O, yes, yes, all my youth, noodles and mush. Stuff that didn't smell. The kitchen in the Passage Choiseul was on the second floor, as big as a cupboard, you got to the second floor by a corkscrew staircase, like this, and you had to go up and down endlessly to see if was cooking, if it was boiling, if it wasn't boiling, impossible. My mother was a cripple, one of her legs didn't work, and she had to climb that staircase. We used to climb it twenty-five times a day. It was some life. An impossible life. And my father was a clerk. He came home at five. He had to do the deliveries for her. O, no, that was poverty, dignified poverty.

INTERVIEWERS

Did you also feel the harshness of poverty when you went to school?

CELINE

We weren't rich at school. It was a state school, you know, so there weren't any complexes. Not many inferiority complexes, either. They were all like me, little flea-bitten kids. No, there weren't any rich people in that place. We knew the rich ones. There were two or three. We worshipped them! My parents used to tell me, those people were rich, the local linen merchant. Pru'homme. They'd drifted in by mistake, but we recognized them, with awe. In those days we worshipped the rich man! For his wealth! And at the same time we thought he was intelligent.

INTERVIEWERS

When and how did you become aware of the injustice it represented?

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CELINE

Very late, I must confess. After the war. It happened, you see, when I saw people making money while the others were dying in the trenches. You saw it and you couldn't do anything about it. Then later I was at the League of Nations, and there I saw the light. I really saw the world was ruled by the Ox, by Mammon! O, no kidding! Implacably. Social consciousness certainly came to me late. I didn't have it, I was resigned.

INTERVIEWERS

Was your parents' attitude one of acceptance?

CELINE

It was one of frantic acceptance! My mother always used to tell me, "Poor kid, if you didn't have the rich people (because I already had a few little ideas, as it happened), if there weren't any rich people we wouldn't have anything to eat. Rich people have responsibilities." My mother worshipped rich people, you see. So what do you expect, it coloured me too. I wasn't quite convinced. No. But I didn't dare have an opinion, no, no. My mother who was in lace up to her neck would never have dreamed of wearing any. That was for the customers. Never. It wasn't done, you see. Not even the jeweller, he didn't wear jewels, the jeweller's wife never wore jewels. I was one of their errand boys. At Robert's in the rue Royale, at Lacloche's in the rue de la Paix. I was very active in those days. O, la la! I did everything really fast. I'm all gouty now, but in those days I used to beat the Metro. Our feet always hurt. My feet always have hurt. Because we didn't change our shoes very often, you know. Our shoes were too small and we were getting bigger. I ran all my errands on foot. Yes... Social consciousness... When I was in the cavalry I went to the hunting parties at Prince Orloff's and the Duchess of Uzès', and we used to hold the officers' horses. That was as far as it went. Absolute cattle, we were. It was clearly understood, of course, that was the deal.

INTERVIEWERS

Did your mother have much influence on you?

CELINE

I have her character. Much more than anything else. She was so hard, she was impossible, that woman. I must say she had some temperament. She didn't enjoy life, that's all. Always worried and always in a trance. She worked up to the last minute of her life.

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INTERVIEWERS

What did she call you? Ferdinand?

CELINE

No. Louis. She wanted to see me in a big store, at the Hotel de Ville, the Louvre. Buyer. That was the ideal for her. And my father thought so too. Because he'd had so little success with his degree in literature! And my grandfather had a doctorate! They'd had so little success they used to say, business, he'll succeed in business.

INTERVIEWERS

Couldn't your father have had a better position teaching?

CELINE

Yes, poor man, but here's what happened: he needed a teaching degree and he only had a general education degree, and he couldn't go any further because he didn't have any money. His father had died and left a wife and five children.

INTERVIEWERS

And did your father die late in life?

CELINE

He died when *Journey* came out, in '31.

INTERVIEWERS

Before the book came out?

CELINE

Yes, just. O, he wouldn't have liked it. What's more, he was jealous. He didn't see me as a writer at all. Neither did I, for that matter. We were agreed on at least one point.

INTERVIEWERS

And how did your mother react to your books?

CELINE

She thought it was dangerous and nasty and it caused trouble. She saw it was going to end very badly. She had a prudent nature.

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INTERVIEWERS

Did she read your books?

CELINE

O, she couldn't, it wasn't within her reach. She'd have thought it all coarse, and then she didn't read books, she wasn't the kind of woman who reads. She didn't have any vanity at all. She kept on working till her death. I was in prison. I heard she had died. No, I was just arriving in Copenhagen when I heard of her death. A terrible trip, vile, yes—the perfect orchestration. Abominable. But things are only abominable from one side, don't forget, eh? And, you know... Experience is a dim lamp which only lights the one who bears it... and incommunicable... Have to keep that for myself. For me, you only had the right todie when you had a good tale to tell. To enter in, you tell your story and pass on. That's what *Death On The Instalment Plan* is, symbolically, the reward of life being death. Seeing as... it's not the good Lord who rules, it's the devil. Man. Nature's disgusting, just look at it, birdlife, animal life.

INTERVIEWERS

When in your life were you happy?

CELINE

Bloody-well never, I think. Because what you need, getting old... I think if I were given a lot of dough to be free from want—I'd love that—it'd give me the chance to retire and go off somewhere, so I'd not have to work, and be able to watch others. Happiness would be to be alone at the seaside, and then be left in peace. And to eat very little; yes. Almost nothing. A candle. I wouldn't live with electricity and things. A candle! A candle, and then I'd read the newspaper. Others, I see them agitated, above all excited by ambitions, their life's a show, the rich swopping invitations to keep up with the performance. I've seen it, I lived among society people once—'I say, Gontran, hear what he said to you; O, Gaston, you really were on form yesterday, eh! Told him what was what, eh! He told me about it again last night! His wife was saying, O, Gaston surprised us!' It's a comedy. They spend their time at it. Chasing each other round, meeting at the same golf clubs, the same restaurants.

INTERVIEWERS

If you could have it all over again, would you pick your joys outside literature?

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CELINE

O, absolutely! I don't ask for joy. I don't feel joy. To enjoy life is a question of temperament, of diet. You have to eat well, drink well, then the days pass quickly, don't they? Eat and drink well, go for a drive in the car, read a few papers, the day's soon gone. Your paper, some guests, morning coffee, my God, it's lunchtime when you've had your stroll, eh? See a few friends in the afternoon and the day's gone. In the evening, bed as usual and shut-eye. And there you are. And the more so with age, things go faster, don't they? A day's endless when you're young, whereaswhen you grow old it's very soon over. When you're retired, a days' a flash, when you're a kid it's very slow.

INTERVIEWERS

How would you fill your time if you were retired with income?

CELINE

I'd read the paper. I'd take a little walk in a place where no one could see me.

INTERVIEWERS

Can you take walks here?

CELINE

No, never, no! Better not!

INTERVIEWERS

Why not?

CELINE

I'd be noticed. I don't want that. I don't want to be seen. In a port you disappear. In Le Havre... I shouldn't think they'd notice a fellow on the docks in Le Havre. You don't see a thing. An old sailor, an old fool...

INTERVIEWERS

And you like boats?

CELINE

O, yes! Yes! I love watching them. Watching them come and go. That and the jetty, and me, I'm happy. They steam, they go away, they come back, it 's none of your business, eh? No one asks you

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anything! Yes, and you read the local paper, *Le Petit Havrais*, and... and that's it. That's all. O, I'd live my life over differently.

INTERVIEWERS

Were there ever any exemplary people, for you? People you'd have liked to imitate?

CELINE

No, because that's all magnificent, all that, I don't want to be magnificent at all, no desire for all that, I just want to be an ignored old man. Those are the people in the encyclopaedias, I don't want that.

INTERVIEWERS

I meant people you might have met in daily life.

CELINE

O, no, no, no, I always see them conning others. They get on my nerves. No. There I have a kind of modesty from my mother, an absolute insignificance, really absolute! What I'm interested in is being completely ignored. I've an appetite, an animal appetite for seclusion. Yes, I'd quite like Boulogne, yes, Boulogne-sur-Mer. I've often been to Saint-Malo, but that's not possible any more. I'm more or less known there. Places people never go...

—J. DARRIBEHAUDE
—J. GUENOT

Translated from the French by James Sherwood

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A Screen Version of

JOURNEY TO THE END OF NIGHT

Celine recorded impromptu

by J. Darribehaude

J. Darribehaude is a French film director and television producer whose interest in Céline's work was rewarded when Céline first became his friend and then accorded him the interviews here printed in English translation for the first time. When considering a screen version of Journey, *he called on Céline with a tape-recorder and asked him to suggest ideas for the script. Céline, who had long envisaged such a film, responded with an unusually complete impromptu monologue which amounted to a working draft for a film scenario.*

Well, here you are. July '14. We're in the Avenue du Bois. And here we have three somewhat nervy Parisiennes. Ladies of the time—time of Gyp. So then, for God's sake, we hear what they're saying. And along the Avenue du Bois, along the *allée cavalière* goes a general, his *aide de camp* bringing up the rear, on horseback, of course, on horseback. So the first of the ladies, for God's sake, "O I say, it's General de Boisrobert, did you see?" "Yes, I saw." "He greeted me, didn't he?" "Yes, yes, he greeted you. I didn't notice him. I'm really not interested, you know." "But the *aide de camp*, it's little Boilepère, O he was there yesterday, he's impossible, don't show you've seen anything, don't look, don't look. He was telling us all about the big exercises at Mourmelon, you know! O, he said, it means war, I'll be leaving, I'm going... He's impossible, isn't he, with his war..."

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Then you hear music in the distance, ringing, warlike music.

"D'you think so, really?"

"O yes, darling, they're impossible, with this war of theirs. These military parades in the evenings, what d'you think they look like? It's ludicrous, it's comic opera. Last time at Longchamps I saw all those soldiers with stewpots on their heads, sort of helmets, you'd never believe it, it's so ugly, that's what they call war, making themselves look ugly. It's ridiculous, in my opinion, quite ridiculous. Yes yes yes, ridiculous. O do look, there's the attaché, the Spanish Embassy. He's talking war too, darling, it's quite appalling, O really I'm quite tired of it, we'd do far better to go on a shoot and kill pheasants. Wars nowadays are ridiculous, for heavens' sake, it's unthinkable, one just can't believe in them any more. They sing those stupid songs, no really, like Maurice Chevalier, actually he's rather funny, he makes everyone laugh."

So there you are, yes, that's all.

"O, I'd far rather talk about the flower carnival, yes, the flower carnival, it was so pretty, so lovely everywhere. But now they're going off to war, so stupid, isn't it, it's quite impossible, it can't last."

Good, O.K., we've got a curtain-raiser there, we're in the war. Good. At that point you can move into Paris and show a bus, there are plenty of striking shots, a bus going down towards the *Carrefour Drouot*, at one point the bus breaks into a gallop, that's a funny sight to see, the three-horse Madeleine-Bastille bus, yes, get that shot there. Good, right. At that point you go out into the countryside. Take the landscapes in *Journey*. You're going to have to read *Journey* again—what a bore for you. You'll have to find things in *Journey* that still exist. The Passage Choiseul, you're sure to be able to take that. And there'll be Epinay, the climb up to Epinay, that'll still be there for you. Suresnes, you can take that too, though it's not the same as it was... And you can take the Tuileries, and the Square Louvois, the little street, you ought to get a look at that, see what fits in with your ideas.

Then there's mobilisation. All right. At that point you begin the *Journey*. This is where the heroes of *Journey* go off to war—part of the big picture. You'll need a pile of dough for that...

Then the end.

I'm giving you a dreamy passage here, then maybe you can show a bit of the Meuse countryside, that's where I began in the war, by the way, a bit of Flanders, good, fine, you just need to look at it, it's very evocative, and then very softly you begin to let the rumbling

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of the guns rise up. What you knew the war by, what the people of 14 knew it by, was the gunfire, from both sides. It was a rolling BLOM BELOLOM BELOM, it was a mill, grinding our epoch down. That's to say, you had the line of fire there in front of you, that was where you were going to be written off, it was where they all died. Yes and what you were supposed to do was climb up there with your bayonet. But for the most part it meant shooting and flames. First shooting, then burning. Villages burning, everything burning. First shooting, then butchery.

Show that as best you may, it's your problem, work it out. I'm relying on little Descaves, there. You need music to go with the sound of the guns. Sinister kind of music, kind of deep Wagnerian music, he can get it out of the music libraries. Music that fits everything. Very few speeches. Very few words. Even for the big scene, even for the three hundred million. Gunfire. BELOMBELOLOM BOM, *tactactac*. Machine-guns—they had them already. From the North Sea to Switzerland there was a four-hundred-and-fifty kilometre strip which never stopped chewing up men from one end to the other. Yes, O yes, whenever a guy got there he said, so this is where it happens, this is where the chopper is, eh. That was where we all slaughtered each other. No dreaming there! One million seven hundred thousand died just there. More than a few. With retreats, advances, retreats, louder and louder BOBOOMS, big guns, little guns, not many planes, no, you can show a plane vaguely, but they weren't much, no, what scared us was the gunfire, pure and simple. The Germans had big guns and they were a big surprise, for the French army, 105's, we didn't have any. O.K. And bicycles which you bent in half and folded up.

So to end your story, the *Journey*, see, it ends, well, it ends as best it can, eh, but still, there is one end, a conclusion, a signature after the *Journey*, a really lifelike one. The book ends in philosophical language, the book does, but not the film. Here's how it is for the film. This was one way I saw the end, like this: there's an old fellow—I think of him as Simon—who looks after the cemetary, the military cemetary. Well, he's old now, he's seventy, he's worn out. And the director of the military cemetary, the curator, he's a young man and he's let him know it's time he retired. Ah, he says, by all means, I'd like nothing better, can't get about any more. Because you see, they've built him a little hut, not far from Verdun, you know, a hut, so this hut, this kind of Nissen hut, he's turned it into a little café-bar at the same time, and he's got a gramophone, but really, a period gramophone, yes! So

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in this bar, he serves people drinks and he talks, you know, he tells his story, tells it to lots of people, and you see the bar, and people coming in, many people used to come, they don't come any more, to visit the graves of their dear departed, but after all those tombs of the dear departed he feels pretty old, eh, and it's a lot of trouble getting there, so much trouble he doesn't go any more, himself, because he says, I'm too old, I can't, I can't move. Walk three kilometres over those furrows, too much bloody trouble, it is, impossible, I'd come back dead, I would, I'm worn out, worn out, I am. And he has an opportunity to say that because the director of the cemetary has found someone to take his place. And who is this someone who'll take his place? I'll tell you. It's... they're Armenians. A family of Armenians. There's a father, a mother, and five little children. And what are they doing there? Well, they'd gone to Africa, like all Armenians, and they'd been kicked out of it, and someone told them they could go and hide up North, they'd find a cemetary and a fellow just on the point of quitting and they could take his place. And oh, he says, that's fine, because the kids are sick, Africa's too hot for them anyway. So Simon takes them in. The cemetary-keeper. He has his peaked cap on and all. Well, he says, you'll be taking my place. You'll be none too warm, though. If you want to make a bit of a fire, there's wood for the fetching, though the wood fire's just an old stove for his pot, and he says, me, I can't last any longer, because of all this running around. There used to be the Americans, in the old days. There still are the Americans, too, down under there, you'll see, you'll find them... well, I'll show you the gate where they come in, it's not far, hardly a kilometre, but I can't do it any more—because he limps too, you see, he limps too—I'm wounded, I am, disabled eighty per cent after '14, it makes a difference! I'll be going to live with my sister. A fine bitch of a woman she was. Lives at Asnières! Dirty slut, she is! She says I've got to go, she says I've got to but I don't know that I'll get on with her, haven't seen her for thirty years now, I haven't, dirty slut she was, must be more of a slut than ever by now. She's married, she says they've a room, maybe, I don't know what I'll do there, still, can't stay here, can I, can't do the job, I can't do it. There aren't many doing it nowadays, two or three of them still come, there used to be plenty, they used to come in droves, in the old days, in memory of them all, the French and the English, there are all kinds buried down there, but you'll see, like they told me, oh, put the crosses right, yes, some have fallen down, of course they have, time does its work, crosses won't stay up for ever, so I put the crosses right

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as best I could for a long time, but I don't go any more now, no, no, I can't, I have to lie down afterwards, you see, I can't, and lying down here wouldn't be any pleasure, and I've no one with me, so the visitors come and as it happens one good woman, an American, a very old American woman and she says, "I want to see my old friend John Brown, my dear uncle that died, don't you have him there?" "O," he says, "it's all in the registers, wait a moment, I'll go and have a look, yes, I'll show you the register, there," and he shows her the register and says, "I kept it well, you see, there, can't say I didn't do that, eh, now let's see, Brown, Brown, Brown. Oh, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. Well, you know, it's down in the *Fauvettes* cemetary, down there, lady, had to find, it is. No, no, please, him over there, with his wife and children, very interesting, the grounds are, they'll put it all in order for you; and I can't, you see, I can't, I've told you I can't, it's no use, madam, and believe me if you try going over there, eh, eh, let me tell you, finding where he is, he's there all right, in my register, but it's a long while since I went to look at it, the American one, it's a long way, two and a half kilometres at least, no, no, let them do it, they'll do it. I can serve you what there is, though, granadilla juice, lemon. Oh, you'd like a cup of coffee, oh, to be sure, we couldn't say no to a cup of coffee, I'll make you a cup of coffee.

And he makes her a cup of coffee, d'you follow, he's got a nose for a wealthy dame. Well, he says, you see, my sister, over in Asnières, here's the coffee, a little coffee? Do you know, that reminds me, I'm not so sure she knows how to make it. A trollop, she is, I say it myself. Eh, I don't know what I'll do, I don't, still, have to go, really have to go. So there it is. Yes. I'm going. Yes, I'm really going, I'm going to leave you with them. Don't be frightened, now! (the others are beginning to look scared). Oh, it's none too warm here, but just you put some wood on and it warms up, that's no trouble. Oh, you'll see, it's no joke, here. What about a bit of music. Ah, it was a good one, that gramophone there was, a fine one, ah yes, one from the old days, it was, it was a... and he gets out a wind-up thing and they play the old-time records, but really the old-time, eh—*Viens Poupoule! Ma Tonkinoise!*—there you are, you see, it's better with that on, isn't it, you can play it all summer long, you can, that'll bring them in again, once they've swabbed the place down a bit, just needs doing, eh? Well, madam, going back, are you? Going to Paris, are you? You've got a car? Well, now, I must say, that'd be a help, that would, fancy that, eh, going back in a car...

Translated from the French by Patrick Bowles

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THE MONEY MACHINE

Warren Miller

Often, walking down some avenue, the wide black portfolio swinging from his hand, he caught sight of himself in a shop window and wondered: Who could that be, that city fellow? Or sometimes, seeing his shoes, so thin-soled and unserviceable, he would smile with pity for the man wearing them. They'll never hold up, he told himself. Seeing them under the table at some restaurant; or as he sat on one of those chairs he had used to believe existed only in photographs, his legs crossed, he would by chance see those shoes and smile with contempt. Noticing this, the woman with him might say, "Do I amuse you then, Charles?"

Half his life he had lived in the city—had not really lived at home since he was seventeen—and the longer he stayed the more strange it seemed; with each year the city became for him more peculiar and unreliable. Finally, he had to admit to himself that the city could never be his, that he was not a participant in its life but merely an observer; and even more:

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that he was an observer who was not only too lazy to make notes, but one who would not even count his money. Himself in the city was, like everything else, also to be observed. He, Charles, wearing thicksoled shoes, his pockets heavy with marbles and acorns and lead sinkers he had himself poured into the stone mould, looked at this stranger he had become and asked himself: Would it seem so strange if I were able to recover all the lost fragments? Surely they could then be put together and this city fellow in his well-pressed suit would *naturally* emerge? Would not his history reveal him, Mr. Ives? Out of one bone from a spinal column, Charles reasoned, they can reconstruct a dinosaur.

But that sort of thing was only to amuse himself as he walked from one office to the next, opening his portfolio and showing his wares to art directors who wore suits exactly like his. Often, talking to one of these men about his studio's services or discussing the technicalities of a job, he thought of Charles Ives selling insurance in New England. Had Mr. Ives, he asked himself, ever said to a prospect: "And *if* you should pass out of the picture..." Had he ever said that? Charles wondered. Oh, Mr. Ives.

He knew that *this* Charles, the one with the portfolio and the fancy talk—"Actually, what I am is a salesman but in this field they are called Representatives. But actually what I am is just an oldfashioned drummer. We Americans have this tendency, you know. Plumbers have all become Sanitary Engineers."—this one calling himself Charles was really beyond explaining. He could watch him; that was all he could do: watch, sometimes amused, sometimes contemptuous; and, as time went on, he grew more and more astonished by what he saw; even shocked. Finally, however, this passed into unbelief and, often, seeing his image in a glass, he walked by without recognising Charles. Half a block away he would think: But good heavens! Wasn't that...?

Furthermore, he knew very well there was no way to go about this project; in fact, he was not certain what the lost items ought to consist of. On a late summer afternoon, having just concluded an arrangement with an advertising agency

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that he knew was going to be very profitable for himself and the studio he worked for (represented), he took himself into a bar and bought himself a drink. "Here is one tired drummer," he said, because as he sat down at the little table he had heard himself sigh. The idea occurred to him then, and it may well have been the result of the man at the next table saying, "A whiskey sour, please, but don't let them put all that garbage in it."

Perhaps it was that; or perhaps the memory of those movies he had sat through twice, or until someone came in and got him, based on stories by H. G. Wells. He had a favorite seat, so they always knew where to find him. Sitting there in the bar he remembered with absolute clarity the voice of H.B. Warner—or perhaps it was some other Englishman; they had all been very mysterious and their accents had excited him, so exotic they were; and the strange little cars they drove!—H.B. Warner he thought it was; certainly not C. Aubrey Smith; although it might have been Montagu Love—was it Montagu Love?—one of them, anyway, standing in a roomful of plush furniture and unbelievably thick curtains, a fire burning cosily in the grate, stroking his chin, saying, "Suppose I told you, my dear Henderson, that every word ever uttered still exists somewhere in the ether. Now suppose, my dear Henderson, we constructed a machine..."

For many years his grandfather and his aunts were certain he was going to be an inventor. In the part of the barn where the carriage and the wagon had once been (under the hay loft), he always had in process some complicated device which never worked. Everyone understood it was not meant to; but they could all see that he was groping toward something very original and rare. They would not, at the same time, have been surprised if, out of one of his strange constructs of old spark plugs, copper wire, horseshoe nails, nearly dead batteries, rusted rheostats and victrola horns, a voice had emerged, saying, perhaps, "Knowing that it will afford you pleasure to learn that I have brought my undertaking to a successful termination, I have decided upon writing this letter to acquaint you with all the events which have occurred in

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my voyage, and the discoveries which have resulted from it. Thirty three days after my departure from Cadiz I reached the Indian Sea, where I discovered many islands..."

And at this point his aunt, the dark one he loved best, could have contained herself no longer; and with great pride, looking at him but speaking to the others, she would have said, "I swear that Charles has managed to get KDKA. Doesn't that sound to you like KDKA?"

He would have stood there in his sturdy shoes, his back to the dead forge and the pitted anvil and the harness that was stiff and grey with rot, and smiled modestly and said nothing, permitting them all to believe it was only Pittsburgh.

Oh, I was deep, Mr. Ives; when I was little, I was deep. And all it cost eleven cents (*eleven cents*, Mr. Ives!) to sit in my favorite seat at the Hippodrome: ten cents for the ticket and one penny for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Suppose I told you, my dear Mr. Ives, that this man sitting next to me who wants no garbage in his whiskey, that this man could be made wholly invisible? Suppose now that we construct a machine...

What would those items be? Charles asked himself. Through the window he could see a piece of Central Park, the poor dirty trees drawing night around themselves. The park, he had observed, grew dark before the rest of the city, as if the trees could not wait to hide themselves, ashamed of their sooty, soiled leaves and bark, the daily violations they suffered. A storehouse or warehouse, he thought, some gigantic celestial bin, millions of drawers all neatly labelled. Suppose I told you, my dear Henderson, that all those things you think you've lost were never really lost?

Charles signalled for another drink and opened the drawer with his name on it. He saw the contents of it so clearly that tears came to his eyes and he averted his head when the waiter brought the drink. There were the blue mittens his aunt had knitted for him; there were seven rollerskate keys; a handful of ball bearings; and a green wooden snake that moved in oily *S*'s when grasped the right way. There was an envelope of uncancelled stamps from the Cameroons; beaded mocas-

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sins; the sunglasses, made of *celluloid*, he had lost while waiting for the eclipse the summer he was eight. And a flip-book showing Babe Ruth hitting a home run, his pear-shaped body turning so gracefully on tiny ankles; a newspaper photo of little Gloria Vanderbilt, and another of Toby Wing and one of Les Tremayne and Barbara Luddy clipped from *Radio Guide*.

There was a complete set of the X-Bar-X Boys books; a signed photo of Chandu the Magician; an oaktag poster he had made for National Book Week (A Book is a Bark to Many Lands); the Jack Armstrong code book ("*This way, Billy!*" Oh, he could hear Jack's manly whisper, imperious but basically kind; and he could see the hole in the floor his grandfather had drilled, through which the wire ran from the radio to the battery, that black mysterious force never quite forgotten where it sat in the cellar under the shelves of preserves.)

At the back of the drawer, under Christmas-present scarfs, there was his catcher's mitt, the tennis racket he had inherited from his aunt, a book called *The Magnetic Island*, magnets, fish hooks, and a bag full of marbles; and cigar boxes containing matchbook covers, eighteen keys on a ring, colored chalk, wax crayons, jacks, a never used contraceptive, an introductory pamphlet from the Rosicrucian Brotherhood telling the story of a man named Jack Steele (after long wandering he found wisdom, returned home, and struck oil in his own backyard), a gyroscope, a compass, a white paper bag with an elephant printed on it (it had held peanuts), itching powder, sneezing powder, Chinese puzzles, a device that fit under the tongue and enabled you to throw your voice (*Let me out! Let me out!*).

There was a boomerang from the Philadelphia Sesquicentennial (Oh the sesquicentennial, Mr. Ives!), a bottle of banana oil, the model of a Fokker-Wolf, a Win-A-Pony blank, twelve copies of *The Shadow* magazine (Oh, Lamont Cranston!) There was a wind-up train and two pieces of curving track...

Charles slammed shut the drawer; and, in the same move-

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ment, stood up and went to the phonebooth to call his friend—"This woman I know"—and ask her to meet him there at the bar, which was the kind of dark place where they usually met. When he returned to his table he proceeded to do something he had, until now, made a point of never doing: he reviewed his prospects. That is, he counted his money. He tried, at first, to do this without seeing numbers in his head, saying to himself, "Well now, uh, let's say that I was making such and such, and that now, having consumated this uh deal today, I can count on an additional sum of uh so much more." Since numbers were full of mystery for Charles, he decided to let his mind go blank, to empty it of everything as, he had heard, mystics claimed to do. Staring at his drink he achieved blankness in a remarkably short time; while in that state the sum of four hundred dollars, complete with dollar sign, appeared in his head. It was illuminated and it glowed like the scroll the angel had given to Mr. Nowack.

"Well, what do you think of a sum like that, Mr. Ives? And *per* week! Beyond your wildest imagining, eh, Cranston?"

It was the air in the bar, he realised now, that had made him think of such a thing: it smelled of money. All artificial air, for Charles, carried the odor of money with it. There was a machine somewhere in this building, in the cellar or under the roof or in a shed on the roof, and it was, at great expense, manufacturing air. Whenever Charles, carrying his portfolio, walked into one of those new buildings on Madison or Third, as soon as he stepped into the great white jaws of their lobbies, he could smell the money. There is, Charles knew, a special odor to money that is being spent; it is altogether different from the smell of money in a vault. The smell of money being spent is tangy and exciting, like the odor of one's own sweat; and this is especially true when it is a great deal of money and when it is being spent simply because it is *there*, because it is budgeted and earmarked for sending.

It was always a little frightening to walk into those buildings; always he saw the sick gypsy dying on the high seat of the wagon, and he knew that the machine, that cunning

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little wood and brass box, was working. It was working! He had been right all along.

In fact, he could never be certain he had seen the gypsy, actually seen her, or whether he had only heard the story from his grandfather and then created the scene in his mind. However it was, he could in fact see it and had almost convinced himself now that he had been present, actually there in the bakery when the gypsy came and sold the money machine to old Mr. Hartenstein.

The town, not even a county seat but only a market town, was five miles from the village where he lived; and before he started going to school he went there nearly every day with his grandfather in the horse and buggy. They always went to Hartenstein's bakery and loaded the back of the buggy with loaves of pumpernickel and rye, black bottomed and dusty with flour; and long fat loaves of white bread, pale and unappealing except where they had split their sides in the oven and their soft innards swelled out.

He felt very much at home in the town; he knew its back streets and alleys as well, almost, as the roads and hidden paths of his village. He puzzled only over one thing: on Saturdays, did the town come to life *for* the farmers; or was it the farmers that brought life with them to the town? He suspected it was the first, and had an image of a merchant on lookout in the tower of the derelict Opera House, crying, "Here they come!"

Across the street from Hartenstein's bakery was a row of company houses and an open field; beyond this field was the steel mill. For years the slag had been dumped on the margin of the field, by the time of Charles' boyhood it had grown to a grey, scaly mountain that looked as soft as soap; although even at that time a cow and several goats still grazed there. The bakery was directly across from the field; the baking was done in the basement; on the street level there was a grocery store run by Mrs. Hartenstein and her daughters. In the summertime, she always gave Charles a half-pint of chocolate milk. While his grandfather had his order filled and settled accounts, Charles usually sat on the cement steps that

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led up to the store and drank the milk. He drank it out of the bottle, which was what made it so special. (That bottle, Mr. Ives! That darling little bottle!)

It was here at Hartenstein's, on Saturdays, that Charles' grandfather did his betting. Charles once heard a man say, speaking of Charles' grandfather, "Hen-ery has made that horse of his pay for herself ten times over." At the time, Charles had no idea what this meant; but it was one of those statements made by an adult he remembered for years, along with such others as: "Hen-ery is one wily Dutchman all right," and "He's got more money than he count," and, "He's richer than God." There were always men about who said incomprehensible things and Charles could never be certain why he remembered some and not others, fretting himself over a word like *wily* and wondering how rich was God and why could his grandfather not count beyond a certain number. Ten skillion? For many years he was fascinated beyond forgetting by a statement made at Flickinger's barbershop. There a man had said, "No greater love hath he than the man who will lay down his own wife for his country." He had been so mystified by this that he had not even pretended to laugh along with the others.

Years later, when he went back for his aunt's funeral, he walked to the bakery, now being run by Hartenstein's son. That part of the town had not changed very much. The company houses were still standing, the wood of them so weathered, so nearly fossilised, they looked as if they were made of some strange kind of stone. The bakery had been changed not at all. The township had tried to make a park of the open field. The slag heap had been carted away; but it must have poisoned the ground, because grass would not grow. There were cement walks and green benches where old men sat smoking pipes. The air smelled the same, however, and he recognised some of the old men, although not one of them recognised him.

Sometimes walking down Madison or Third, following his daily route, he would see a man and know at a glance that he was not of the city. The man always wore a suit just

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like Charles', and the thin-soled shoes that would never do; but there was something—in his face? his hands?—that would cause Charles to recognise him. Once, one of these men stared back at Charles; they almost spoke; but they stopped just short of saying, "Don't kid *me*, buddy," or "Ain't it *aw*ful!" Charles knew he would never speak to any of these men; it was too private. Not even his dearest friends in the city, not even this woman he knew, were aware how often he laughed at them.

The first time he laughed at them, and was aware he was doing so, was at the apartment of friends one night. They had got onto the subject of the music of Charles Ives because one of the guests was a man who reviewed music for a weekly magazine. This woman Charles knew was also present at the party and she whispered to Charles, "He is famous for rediscovering Beethoven every year." That night, however, the music critic was talking about Ives and his use of American folk songs and the music of firehouse bands. He said, "Ives celebrates an America that never existed."

Everyone laughed, enjoying the man's wit and the shrewdness of his insight; they would quote it for weeks. Charles laughed too, and only a little louder than anyone else. He remembered then that he had laughed in this same way when, on first coming to the city, he had seen a group of teenagers on the subway; they were going to a folk-dance, to a *hoot* as they called it, and had dressed for the occasion by wearing blue jeans and what they imagined to be country-style shirts. He had laughed then, remembering how he and his friend Leroy and everyone in the village had always put on their best suits and dresses to go to the Saturday-night hoe-down at the firehouse; they dressed as if for church.

The waiter switched on some lights in wallbrackets fastened to the red plush walls, but they gave off almost no light at all; the bulbs seemed to be merely painted there, a clever *trompe l'oeil* effect. Charles said, "Suppose I told you, my dear Henderson, suppose I told you, my dearest Charles Ives, that now, now at this very moment, sitting here with these cleverly contrived ear-phones on—This electromagnet, so small it is

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hardly visible to the naked eye, Henderson, attracts from the ether certain charged particles...—I can hear the firehouse band playing Strauss and Sousa, and can see, in that America which never existed, the gold of the tuba and the silver of the trumpets and the words painted on the drum? Oh Mr. Henderson, oh Mr. Ives."

It was at the bakery and at this firehouse that more often than not his grandfather made his bets, never less than five and, occasionally, even ten dollars. There was nearly always someone who had heard of Daisy and was willing to try, who would walk up to his grandfather and say, "Henery, I hear you got a mean horse."

That was a man who was hooked, a man who saw the way to doubling the five or ten dollars in his pocket. "Well now let me tell you something, Hen-ery," he would say, "I will just take that bet." Then he would look around for the right man to hold the money while Charles' grandfather unharnessed Daisy. "Take all the time you want," his grandfather would say to the man, handing over to him the black web of straps and rusted iron, halter, reins, and bridle.

Charles always stayed to watch, but after the first ten or twelve times his grandfather pretended to a great lack of interest in the whole thing; he would go into the firehouse and drink a couple glasses of homemade beer. Outside, the farmer, his money riding, sweated and cursed, holding the straps now more like a net than a harness, suffering the laughter of the men who watched. Usually, after about an hour of it, he would give up, throw down the harness and walk off. Some men, though, persisted too long and Daisy, touchy and having lost all patience, reared up, flashing hoofs and teeth, and pushed them to the wall. Charles had seen these men cowering against the redbrick walls of Hartenstein's bakery or the firehouse, the palms of their hands flat against the bricks and moving, as if seeking some niche or knob that would lead to safety.

His grandfather always walked off with the money; he took home ten when he had left with five; and sometimes, on a good Saturday, more than that. He would take the money

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and then, whispering to Daisy, stroking away her wildness, harness her in a few minutes. He was the only man she let come near her; no one knew how he had done it.

Charles looked out at Fifth Avenue where the cars now formed a solid unmoving mass; it was as if the street, somewhere ahead, narrowed to a car's width, and all waited like cattle at a slaughter house to pass through. Finally, his friend arrived. She stood at the entrance for a moment and narrowed her eyes in order to be able to find him, sitting on the other side of the room. Charles had always wanted to tell her that this was uglier than wearing glasses, this habit of narrowing the eyes in order to focus the vision. It made her look calculating and hard, like a manager counting the house or a judge at a stock fair.

Charles had met her soon after leaving his wife, an event which had taken place about seven years after coming to the city. Since then, because he had to give most of his money to support his wife and son, he had lived in a furnished room. He had been trying for a long time to get out of that room, which was painted brown of course; this was the reason he had counted his money. He believed that now he could afford to do so. He thought he'd feel a lot better if he could get an apartment that for at least a couple hours of the day drew some light into it. His room was on the parlor floor of an old brownstone that had once been the townhouse of a famous old Dutch family. Charles' room had probably once been the drawing room. It was haunted; actually, however, Charles had never seen the ghost. Nevertheless, he knew it was haunted because when he had first moved into that room he had felt the presence of an old man. The presence stayed on one side of the room only; it often sat with its legs crossed on a large upholstered chair. After the first encounter Charles found that he did not mind the old man's being there. Occasionally, though, it did bother him a lot; and he discovered a simple way of exorcising the old man. He opened a window.

This had been Charles' first and only experience with ghosts or spirits, a subject which had ceased to interest him

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since the day he stopped listening to Chandy the Magician. He made a point of telling his friends about it; he spoke about it in a quite matter of fact way. He told his friend at the studio about it. He said, "Peter, have I told you I have a ghost in my room?"

Peter said, "Why, no, Charles, I don't think you have. You mustn't mention it to the landlord. He will be sure to apply for a rent increase."

Peter was not yet thirty but, as co-owner of the studio, he was making almost one thousand dollars a week. Everytime Charles saw him he thought: *It's working! It's really working!* This never ceased to cause Charles to wonder; he did not wonder that the machine was working—because it so obviously was—but how it had been put back into operation, why it was functioning again, and how long before it would break down again, puzzled him a great deal. I admit that I am puzzled, he told himself.

When the gypsy brought the machine into old Mr. Hartenstein's grocery store it had worked perfectly. It was a box, only a little over a foot long, the wood stained by age and much handling, the corners protected with brass. The handle, however, was of a coarse galvanized iron; although he had never touched it, Charles could imagine very well how it felt, the roughness of it, the prickling little bubbles in the iron.

His wife, the gypsy's wife, sat on the high seat of the wagon, her head thrown back; her mouth was half open and when, occasionally, she raised her head and looked about, her eyes rolled. A skirt of multicolored strings hung from the horse's harness. But what did he say to Mr. Hartenstein, that gypsy representative? How did he begin? "You were recommended to me by a mutual friend I am sworn not to name." Like that, more likely than not; it had to be mysterious, calculated to make the client lean forward with interest.

"*Who?* Tell me who it was!" Hartenstein must have said, his eyes suspicious and hurt.

"Who told me you would know how to use this marvel-

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lous machine. That you would know its power and know that it must be respected, not abused."

The gypsy began to cry (Charles remembered this part quite clearly); he cried and pointed to his wife who at that moment raised her head and they could all see her dried black mouth and dirty eyes. "She is sick. I must get her into a hospital. I need money at once. That is why I am willing to part with this machine."

Old Hartenstein examined the machine. He tilted his head to do so, thinking this a sign of shrewdness. He said, "If it's a potato peeler, I am not interested. I already bought a potato peeler once."

"Have you a ten dollar bill?" the gypsy asked him. "It is for the demonstration. I will give it right back to you—the ten, and *ten more*."

Hartenstein rang No Sale and gave the gypsy a ten dollar bill. The gypsy laid it on the counter; he blew away the flour and the caroway seeds and flattened the bill with the side of his hand. He inserted it in a slot in the back of the machine. He put one hand on the top of the box, to hold it steady, and with the other he turned the handle slowly as a music grinder while Hartenstein watched, his head tilted, missing nothing. After a few seconds, from out the front of the machine, through another brassbound slot, issued the ten dollar bill; and as it made its slow way out Hartenstein could see there were two of them, back to back now but curling apart the farther they emerged from the slot. When they dropped to the counter, they separated, shedding each other. Hartenstein picked them up; he snapped them between his hands and held them up to the light.

"What...?" he said, his hands shaking.

The gypsy opened the box and showed him the sharp blades that had sliced, that had performed the delicate longitudinal surgery and made two tens out of one.

Shrewd Hartenstein said, "If you can do this, why do you want to sell the machine? You can get all you need for your wife, the hospital..."

"That is the tragedy," the gypsy said. "I have no money.

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I had only a five dollar bill, and I made two,"—and he showed them to Hartenstein—"but that's the end of it. Each bill can be sliced only once. Let me warn you about that, because after I leave I do not want you to say, 'Oh, that gypsy, he cheated me.' Each bill can be sliced only once. I tell you that now."

Hartenstein opened the cash register again. "Let me see you make two of these," he said, offering the gypsy this time a five dollar bill. Hartenstein smiled. Oh he was full of craft. Ah I have you now, gypsy, he thought. The gypsy turned the handle; it made a soft noise like an egg beater whirled slowly. Two fives fell on the counter and curled apart slowly, these two reluctant to separate.

"A twenty!" Hartenstein cried. "A twenty!" He lifted out the cash drawer and from underneath it took a twenty dollar bill.

"Do it yourself now," the gypsy said, and stood back.

Hartenstein put in the bill; as he bent over the machine, a vein appeared in his forehead. He began to crank the handle.

The gypsy spoke in a soft voice, murmuring, as if he were consoling Hartenstein. "Easy now. Easy. Care-full. Be sure it's straight. That's it. That's it. Slowly now. Slowly. Slowly. Slowly. *There!*"

Old Hartenstein never told anyone exactly how much he paid the gypsy for the machine. Charles often wondered where he kept it: in the back room where he slept, perhaps, or in the cellar where the bread was baked; in some dark place, the brass gleaming to life whenever the door was opened.

Soon after this the depression began. The men had been out of work for several months before the mill owners actually had the furnaces put out. When the men heard that the fires had been killed, they began to dig vegetable gardens in their back yards. Yes, well, Charles said, working in the barn, trying to trap the voices in the ether, yes, well, my dear Henderson, what it means is, of course, that the machine has broken down.

It was a very strange winter in the village. Charles could not in fact remember whether this was the first winter or the

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second of the depression; in fact, it was all like one long winter. Summers disappeared. Some of the men made a still, and others brewed beer. Some days Charles helped his friend Leroy cap beer bottles for Leroy's father. He had a small machine, hand operated, that crimped the cap to the bottle top. Through the brown glass he could see the white yeast, thick and flat on the bottom of every bottle.

This was the same winter that Mr. Nowack met the devil in the field behind Charles' grandfather's general store. Mr. Nowack was famous for his strong teeth; he could take the caps off bottles with his teeth. Walking home one night across the field he met the devil and they wrestled; Mr. Nowack bit off the devil's tail. The devil fled and his tail turned into a snake which slithered into a hole. Mr. Nowack lived in a house next to the Catholic cemetery and he reported many strange occurrences that winter. Heavy rains caused shifts in the earth and coffins slid into his cellar; an angel appeared on his porch at twilight and gave him a scroll written in an unknown language.

When Charles' grandfather put the big sign in his window, the picture of the blue eagle with lightning in its claw, all the men who sat around the porch of the store said they hoped it would work.

"N.R.A.?" Mr. Nowack said. He winked at Charles and tapped the side of his nose. "It won't work," he said.

Charles of course already knew that; the eagle could effect no change. It had broken down and all anyone could do was wait until the gypsy came back, or someone else, if there was someone else, who knew how to fix it. Meanwhile, there was nothing else; no magic seemed to work.

Annie, the old woman who lived in Number 11 of Hunky Row, the best witch in the village, could do nothing. Every night they watched her at her back door as she threw a pan full of certain liquids to soak into the ground. Useless. Babies died. Mr. Zezenski, in Number 16, killed his wife and three children and himself; unaccountably he left two other children to live. Charles watched them being taken to the orphanage; they wore their best clothes.

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Then, as the depression went on and on and men out of work became a sign of normalcy, Charles forgot about the machine; he remembered it less and less often. He was going to school in the town by then, and to the dentist every Wednesday, and to the Tarzan serial every Saturday morning (eleven cents!), and after a few years he forgot about it. He began to make real radios that picked up WCAU in Philadelphia and WEEU in Reading (*Hello, all you good people out there in radioland, I want to thank you for the way you have all taken to Crazy Crystal Mineral Water.*) On good days he was able to get WJZ and WEAF (*Listen to the trom-bo-nay, boys and girls... That was the trombo-nay, boys and girls.*)

Oh Mr. Damrosch, Charles cried, sitting in the bar. How I loved your accent, Mr. Damrosch. Come back and tell me about counterpoint just one more time, Mr. Damrosch.

He had forgot all about it, the machine, until he started working for the studio and going to those buildings where he could smell money being spent. Then he remembered the machine again and he thought about it now every day, and wondered how much longer it would continue to work.

His friend had seen him now; she smiled and began to walk toward him. He watched her. He remembered the party where they had met. He had been one of the last to leave; he had waited until she was ready to go; and it was there, that night, he had for the first time told the story about Mr. Hartenstein and the machine.

Before he had even got halfway through the story they all began to laugh. They said, "Oh, *no!* Oh, the *idiot!* But how could he *fall* for such a thing!" And when Charles finished telling the story (*Oh, Mr. Ives!*) he laughed at them because they laughed, and said to himself: Idiots! Idiots! But it *works*, you idiots, it actually works!

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DONALD DAVIE	Letter to Curtis Bradford (P)	**25**: 54
	LaSalle & The Discovery of the Great West (P)	**25**: 55
CATHERINE DAVIS	The New Year's Burden (P)	**21**: 42
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ROBERT DAVIS	Daily (P)	**21**: 103
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CECIL DAWKINS	The Buffalo Ranch (F)	**22**: 100
	The Mourner (F)	**26**: 73
ANNA MARIA DE DOMINICUS	The Art of Fiction VI—Alberto Moravia (*with* Ben Johnson)	**6**: 17
HENRI DE LA GRANGE	Music (*comm.*)	**2**: 109
BARBARA DEMING	Song (P)	**12**: 78
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MICHEL DE SAINT PIERRE	The Aristocrats (*episode*) (*tr.* Max Steele)	**7**: 130 dele
JAMES DICKEY	Mindoro, 1944 (P)	**22**: 122
	Winter Trout (P)	**31**: 98
STEPHEN DIXON	The Chess House (F)	**29**: 16
OWEN DODSON	The Summer Fire (F)	**12**: 63
LAWRENCE DURRELL	An Exchange of Letters with Henry Miller	**29**: 133

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RICHARD EBERHART	Creators (P)	**2**: 50
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SANFORD EDELSTEIN	The Salamander (P)	**10**: 121
ALISTAIR ELLIOT	Thoughts by the Fire (P)	**30**: 65
GEORGE P. ELLIOTT	Of God (P)	**8**: 53
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RALPH ELLISON	The Art of Fiction XVIII—Robert Penn Warren (*with* Eugene Walter)	**16**: 113
RICHARD M. ELMAN	Confession to E (P)	**16**: 145
	Arbor Day (P)	**20**: 66
PETER EVERWINE	To My Father's Ghost (P)	**21**: 41

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WILLIAM FAIN	At the Pool (F)	**14**: 9
JOHN FAIRFAX	Death Among Ships (P)	**7**: 35
	Call Up (P)	**16**: 78
GILBERT FARLANE	The Deserter (F) (*adaptation by* Patrick Bowles)	**9**: 119
ELIZABETH FAURE	*Text*, Mario Avati Portfolio	**17**: 29
	Translation, Giacometti's At the Salon d'Auto	**18**: 118
IRVIN FAUST	Philco Baby (F)	**31**: 72
DAVID FERRY	Elegiac (P)	**13**: 98
	On the way to the Island (P)	**13**: 98
	The Good Man (P)	**13**: 99
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EDWARD FIELD	The Charmed Pool (P)	**29**: 116
WILLIAM FIFIELD	Summerhill Madhouse (F)	**16**: 53
DONALD FINKEL	An Aesthetic of Imitation (P)	**15**: 107
	To Professor So-And-So (P)	**28**: 160
CHARLES G. FINNEY	Turtles in the Grass Alas (F)	**23**: 37
ROLF FJELDE	On Their Roundness (P)	**11**: 84
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HAROLD FLEMING	Echoes (P)	**14**: 28
CHARLES FOX	Interview with de Wet (Portfolio)	**31**: 113
BERNARD FRANK	The Low Countries (F) (*tr.* Patsy Southgate)	**2**: 51
RAY FRAZER	The Art of Fiction XXIV—Aldous Huxley (*with* George Wickes)	**23**: 57
BERNARD FRECHTMAN	*Translation*, Genet's *from* A Thief's Journal	**13**: 45
ARTHUR FREEMAN	New England Mills (P)	**23**: 47
BLAIR FULLER	Markle and the Mouse (F)	**2**: 90
	Text, Jean Jones Portfolio	**12**: 95
	Text, Anita de Caro Portfolio	**13**: 93
	The Art of Fiction XV—Françoise Sagan (*with* Robert B. Silvers)	**14**: 83
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	Text, Lars Bo Portfolio	**25**: 31
P. N. FURBANK	The Art of Fiction I—E. M. Forster (*with* F. J. H. Haskell)	**1**: 29

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DAVID GALLER	The Wrack (P)	**19**: 91
DONALD GARDNER	St. Jerome (P)	**30**: 63
ISABELLA GARDNER	Children Are Game (P)	**7**: 183
JEAN GARRIGUE	Jazz Bit (P)	**29**: 74
	Broken Dialog (P)	**29**: 75
JEAN GENET	*from* A Thief's Journal (*chron.*) (*tr.* Bernard Frechtman)	**13**: 45
LEE GERLACH	Earth and Air (P)	**24**: 70
ALBERTO GIACOMETTI	At the Salon d'Auto	**18**: 118
ANDREW GLAZE	St. Jerome (P)	**12**: 53
RICHARD H. GOLDSTONE	The Art of Fiction XVI—Thornton Wilder	**15**: 37
NADINE GORDIMER	Face from Atlantis (F)	**13**: 101
ROBERT GREENWOOD	Explication (P)	**13**: 121
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ALLEN GROSSMAN	Without Watchers We are Not Safe (P)	**19**: 58
	The Householder Awakes (P)	**19**: 59
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J. EDGAR GROVE	Don't Joggle Me (F)	**5**: 63

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ALBERT J. GUERARD	The Lusts and Gratifications of Andrada (F)	28: 73
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THOM GUNN	The Wound (P)	3: 90
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	A School of Resistance (P)	25: 52
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JOHN HAISLIP	Blue Fruit (P)	11: 137
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CHARLES HALDEMAN	Man is a Wonderful Woundable Animal (F)	30: 166
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ALEX HAMILTON	The Art of Fiction VII—Joyce Cary (*with* John Burrows)	7: 63
IAN HAMILTON	Father, Dying (P)	29: 131
F. J. H. HASKELL	The Art of Fiction I—E. M. Forster (*with* P. N. Furbank)	1: 29
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JOHN HEATH-STUBBS	The Peacock and the Snake (P)	27: 57
ROGER HECHT	A Candle for the Night (P)	14: 62

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ROGER HECHT	Americans Abroad: Off Perce Rock (P)	14: 63
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JAMES LEO HERLIHY	The Sleep of Baby Filbertson (F)	4: 9
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S. HIGGINSON	*Translation*, Chesnaie's The Year in French Literature	1: 108
GEOFFREY HILL	Genesis (P)	2: 30
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	Pennies for Charon (P)	8: 73
	Canticle for good Friday (P)	21: 98
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PATI HILL	In the House Where They Were Born (F)	2: 58
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DANIEL HOFFMAN	In a Cold Climate (P)	13: 124
JOHN HOLLANDER	The Fable of the Bears in Winter (P)	11: 59
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THEODORE HOLMES	A Farmer's Getting Up (P)	16: 146
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MARJORIE ANAÏS HOUSEPIAN	How Levon Dai Was Surrendered to the Edemuses (F)	11: 72
RICHARD HOWARD	L'Invitation au Voyage (P)	13: 122
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VILMA HOWARD	After the War (P)	4: 94

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VILMA HOWARD	Belle (F)	8: 99
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ROBERT HUFF	The Lay Brother (P)	18: 121
D. J. HUGHES	Lord Chandos to His Wife (P)	18: 56
TED HUGHES	Crow Hill (P)	21: 71
MAC HYMAN	The Hundredth Centennial (F)	7: 9

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JULIAN JEBB	The Art of Fiction XXX—Evelyn Waugh	30: 73
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BEN JOHNSON	*Translation*, Calvino's Last Comes the Raven	6: 9
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	Translation, Montale's Nuove Stanza (*with* James Merrill)	12: 61
JENNY JOSEPH	Out of Sight of Land (P)	12: 115
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DONALD JUSTICE	Sestina (P)	16: 144
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ERNST KAISER	*Translation*, Bachmann's Everything (*with* Eithne Wilkins)	28: 161
SUE KAUFMAN	Tea at Le Gord (F)	3: 77
BERNARD KEITH	Green Sickness (P)	30: 64
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X. J. KENNEDY	Faces From A Bestiary (P)	24: 70
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JACK KEROUAC	The Mexican Girl (F)	11: 9
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EDWARD KESSLER	Deer (P)	30: 173
JASCHA KESSLER	On Forgetting To Set My Alarm Clock (P)	17: 65

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MILTON KESSLER	Route 40—Ohio, U.S.A. (P)	30: 71
HANS KINKEL	The Sculptor Gustav Seitz, *Text for* Seitz Portfolio	28: 99
CAROLYN KIZER	On Rising from the Dead (P)	22: 119
CONRAD KNICKERBOCKER	Malcolm Lowry and the Outer Circle of Hell (*article for* Lunar Caustic)	29: 12
ROBERT KRIEGER	A Summer's Burning (F)	14: 122
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SUZANNE LAMARRE	Aphrodite (P)	30: 131
JOHN LANGDON	The Blue Serge Suit (F)	12: 8
JOSEPH LANGLAND	The Cobra (P)	8: 82
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PHILIP LARKIN	Referred Back (P)	19: 37
ROBERT LAYZER	Brownstone (P)	3: 21
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	The Sleeping Beauty (P)	15: 34
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	The Little Match Girl (P)	31: 133
JEAN LE MARCHAND	The Art of Fiction II—François Mauriac (*tr.* John P. C. Train)	2: 33
LAURENCE D. LERNER	Mimesis (P)	17: 124
DENISE LEVERTOV	Love Song (P)	27: 95
PETER LEVI, S. J.	In a Corner of Eden (P)	20: 68
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PHILIP LEVINE	Arbor Day (P)	16: 21
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	The Turning (P)	27: 99
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OSWALD LEWINTER	A Monsieur Lyonard, Peintre du Roi (P)	19: 88
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LAWRENCE LIPTON	Materia Poetica (P)	19: 105
JOHN LOGAN	The Mallard's Going (P)	14: 137
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JAMES LORD	*Text*, Giacometti Portfolio	18: 109
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DAVID LOUGÉE	If By This Wanton Surge (P)	6: 63

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DAVID LOUGÉE	Her Country Place (P)	**12**: 79
JAMES LOVETT	Venetian Elegy (P)	**30**: 88
ROBERT LOWELL	*Adaptation*, poems by Boris Pasternak (Mephistopheles & The Seasons)	**26**: 120
MALCOLM LOWRY	Through the Panama (*chron.*)	**23**: 87
	(*note by* Harvey Breit)	**23**: 84
	Comfort (P)	**26**: 28
	Mercy of Fire (P)	**26**: 28
	Death of Oaxaquenian (P)	**26**: 29
	Lunar Caustic (F), *prepared by* M. Lowry *and* Earle Birney (*article by* Conrad Knickerbocker)	**29**: 15 **29**: 12
RICHARD LYONS	Landscape (P)	**23**: 46

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GEORGE MACBETH	Eating Ice-Cream with a Girl (P)	**27**: 111
	The Letters (P)	**29**: 160
GEORGIA MCKINLEY	The Crime (F)	**21**: 126
	Across the Line (F)	**26**: 157
NORMAN MAILER	The First Day's Interview (*investigation*)	**26**: 140
OSSIP MANDELSTAM	*from* Poems	**26**: 127
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	four poems from Stone (*tr.* Rose Styron & Olga Carlisle)	**26**: 132
STEVE MARCUS	The Art of Fiction XXXII—Norman Mailer	**31**: 29
HARRY MATHEWS	The Conversions (F)	**27**: 112
PETER MATTHIESSEN	A Replacement (F)	**1**: 47
	Text, Espinouze, Six Drawings for Faulkner's "These Thirteen" (*portfolio*)	**2**: 72
	The Art of Fiction V—William Styron (*with* George Plimpton)	**5**: 43
	Translation, Ciccione's Assunta Speaks	**6**: 53
	Translation, Montherlant's The Pantin Cemetary (*as Pierre Conrad*)	**1**: 68
ANDRÉ MAUROIS	*Note on* Jorge Luis Borges (*for* Funes the Memorious)	**28**: 118
JANE MAYHALL	The Magician (P)	**5**: 41
JEROME MELLQUIST	A Blurred Retrospective (*comm.*)	**2**: 126
	Translation, Montale's Nuova Stanza (*with* B. Johnson)	**12**: 61
WILLIAM MEREDITH	To Bertholt Brecht (P)	**28**: 112
JAMES MERRILL	Amsterdam (P)	**19**: 56

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ROBERT MEZEY	In the Environs of the Funeral Home (P)	15: 26
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HENRI MICHAUX	*from* Miserable Miracle (*chron.*) (*tr.* Louise Varese)	15: 85
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CHRISTOPHER MIDDLETON	*poems from* Herman Moon's Hourbook (P)	24: 139
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JOHN MILES	Escape Story (P)	15: 77
HENRY MILLER	*Text,* Zev Portfolio	10: 71
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VASSAR MILLER	Love Song for the Future (P)	15: 136
WARREN MILLER	The Money Machine (P)	31: 152
MICHAEL MILLGATE	The Art of Fiction XX—Angus Wilson	17: 89
TED MILTON	Sun, Your Grief is My Grief (P)	30: 130
JULIAN MITCHELL	The Art of Fiction XXIII—Lawrence Durrell (*with* Gene Andrewski)	22: 33
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WILLIAM MITCHELL	An Interview with Ernst Fuchs, *Text for* Fuchs Portfolio	30: 113
EUGENIO MONTALE	Nuove Stanza (P) (in Italian)	12: 60
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HENRY DE MONTHERLANT	The Pantin Cemetery (*comm.*) (*tr.* Pierre Conrad)	1: 68
MOORE MORAN	Horseman, 5 : 14 (P)	23: 81
WILL MORGAN	Crucifixion (P)	4: 120
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HERBERT MORRIS	A Discipline of Zenith Deep as Life (P)	13: 90

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IVAN MORRIS	*Translation, Tanizaki's The Victim*	16: 13
HOWARD MOSS	A Balcony with Birds (P)	4: 25
MARCEL MOUSSY	The Mushroom Hunt (F) (*tr.* John P. C. Train)	4: 114
JOHN MULLIGAN	Vincent van Gogh—The Big Picture (*chron.*)	30: 12
ROBERT BRUCE MURRAY	Afternoons on a Long Staircase (F)	7: 94

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V. S. NAIPAUL	My Aunt Gold Teeth (F)	19: 47
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HAROLD NORSE	An Episode from Procopius (P)	22: 66

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RICHARD O'CONNELL	Annunciation (P)	13: 133
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ROBERT PACK	The Parting Fire (P)	9: 91
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HELEN PINKERTON	Error Pursued (P)	19: 44
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	The Art of Fiction V—William Styron (*with* Peter Matthiessen)	5: 43
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	The Art of Fiction XXXI—S. J. Perelman (*with* William Cole)	30: 147
RICHARD POIRIER	The Art of Poetry II—Robert Frost	24: 89
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CHRISTOPHER RAND	Buddha's Anniversary (*chron.*)	16: 89
SIMON RAVEN	The Art of Fiction III—Graham Greene (*with* Martin Shuttleworth)	3: 25
DAVID RAY	All the Spring Babies (P)	21: 74
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MARK ROSKILL	Chateau de Villandry (P)	21: 122
NORMAN ROSTEN	St. Germain des Près (P)	30: 130
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VERN RUTSALA	Thorpe, Nurmi, Ruth (P)	21: 45
ANNE RYAN	Ludvica (P)	5: 116
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ELIZABETH SAVAGE	Victoria (F)	24: 125
KENNETH SAWYER	The Plastic Year (*comm.*)	6: 130
JAMES SCHEVILL	The Toad and the Poet (P)	12: 108
MARVIN SCHILLER	Les Saltimbanques (F)	16: 148
PIERRE SCHNEIDER	*Text*, Ottaviano Portfolio	12: 54
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	Text, Bram van Velde Portfolio	27: 101
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MAURO SENESI	The Revolutionary (F)	27: 13
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EVELYN SHEFNER	The Fourth-Floor Apartment (F)	19: 109
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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

FICTION

Irvin Faust *(Philco Baby)* is a graduate of CCNY where he majored in physical education. He has a doctorate in education from Teachers College, Columbia. Two previous stories have been published in *Carleton Miscellany*.

Warren Miller *(The Money Machine)* is the author of the novel The Cool World. His stories have appeared in a number of publications, including the New Yorker.

INTERVIEW

Steven Marcus *(The Art of Fiction XXXII - Normal Mailer)* is an editor of Partisan Review and teaches at Columbia University.

ARTICLE

James Sherwood *(A Note on Celine, & translation of Celine Interview)* is the author of *Stradella*, (Olympia Press). Another novel, *Daniel on the Nail Pile*, will be published by Alan Swallow in the Spring. He has written 28 other novels. Their tragi-comic setting has been his birthplace, Hollywood, California, but his most recent, *Eurydouchka*, takes place in Paris, his home.

PORTFOLIO

Charles Fox *(Interview with de Wet)* has had poetry and criticism broadcast by the BBC and Italian Third Programmes and published in *Botteghe Oscure*, *Merlin*, *The Twentieth Century* and other magazines. He was co-editor – with Christopher Logue and Patrick Brangwyn – of *Ninepence*. He reviews jazz records for *The Gramophone*, the *Sunday Times* and the BBC.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Norman Jenkins *(Contents Page Drawing)* is an American painter who has been living in Paris since the early fifties. He has shown many paintings under the name of Yanekun. His line drawings are done mostly on table cloths / a collection of these will be reproduced soon in The Paris Review.

Luc Simon (*Cover*) was born in 1924, in Reims,& studied at the Ecole Nationale des Arts Décoratifs. He has held many exhibitions and is in many collections and museums, both in Europe and America. He designed the stained-glass windows for the church of Fère-en-Tardenois. His work is in the Musée d'Art Moderne in Paris, and he was recently awarded the *Prix des Critiques*.

Frank Wright *(Illustrations for Philco Baby)*, draughtsman and painter, born Washington, D.C., studied at the American University, the University of Illinois and at Harvard. Is presently living in Paris and studying new techniques in gravure.

POETRY

Robert Bly *(Looking Backward, Poem for the Drunkard President)* is the editor of *The Sixties*, a magazine of poetry. His first collection, *Silence in the Snowy Fields*, was recently published in the Wesleyan Poetry Series. He lives on a farm in Madison, Minnesota.

Erratum: *page 54 line 11 for* love *read* lore

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Philip Booth *(The Husband as Hero)* received the Lamont Award for his first book of poems, *Letter from a Distant Land*, and more recently published *The Islanders*, a further collection. He teaches at Syracuse University, New York, where he is active in directing a writing workshop.

Henri Coulette *(The Blue-Eyed Precinct Worker)* lives in South Pasadena, California, and teaches at Los Angeles State College. He has helped edit *Midland*, has contributed to *The New Yorker*, *Mademoiselle*, *Hudson Review*, and many others.

James Dickey *(Winter Trout)* is a native of Atlanta, Ga., whose poems have been collected in *Into the Stone* (Scribner's Poets of Today Series), *Drowning With Others*, and a new collection, *Helmets*, due in spring 1964. He has worked in advertising, is currently poet-in-residence at Reed College.

Donald Hall *(Sleeping)*, former poetry editor of *The Paris Review* and now an advisory editor, has published ten books. *Exiles and Marriages* and *The Dark Houses* contain his poems; *String Too Short To Be Saved* is an autobiography. This year he has been writing in Thaxted, England.

Geoffrey Hill *(A Prayer to the Sun, The Imaginative Life, History as Poetry)* teaches in the University of Leeds. *For the Unfallen*, his first collection of poems, won wide critical acclaim on its appearance in 1959.

John Hollander *(Making It)* has written two books of poems, *A Crackling of Thorns*, the Yale Younger Poets series award winner for 1958, and more recently, *Movie-Going* (1962). *The Untuning of the Sky* is a volume of criticism. He is on the faculty at Yale.

Elizabeth Jennings *(Planck's Theory of Chance, Father to Son)* has edited anthologies and written criticism; but is best known for four books of verse: *Poems, A Way of Looking, A Sense of the World*, and *Song for a Birth or a Death*. Her home is in Oxford.

Donald Justice *(Last Days of Prospero)* received a Lamont award for his book of poems, *The Summer Anniversaries*. He continues to teach at the State University of Iowa and has recently edited the collected poems of Weldon Kees.

X. J. Kennedy *(Cross Ties)* has published one book of poems, *Nude Descending a Staircase*. Currently poetry editor of *The Paris Review*, he teaches at Tufts to make ends meet.

Robert Layzer *(Leinbach's Proof, The Little Match Girl)* writes: "I haven't published anything since 1957 when *New Poets of England and America* came out, the year I graduated from medical school. From 1960–62 I was in the U.S. Naval Medical Corps where I had the leisure to start writing again; the two poems were written then. I'm now back in a residency in neurology at the Neurological Institute of New York."

W. S. Merwin *(Marica Lart, To Where We Are, From a Series)* has published translations of Persius, El Cid, and Spanish ballads in addition to five collections of poetry. A new collection of poems, *The Moving Target*, has just been published by Atheneum. He has been living recently in France.

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Robert Mezey *(You Could Say)* received the Lamont award for his first book of poems, *The Love Maker* (1960). He has been teaching in Tennessee, California, and Ohio.

Christopher Middleton *(For a Future,)* teaches at London University. His collection of poems *Torse 3* appeared in 1962 and was followed by an edition and translation done with Michael Hamburger, *Modern German Poetry, 1910–1960.*

Robert Pack *(Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree)* has published three collections of his poems, the latest being *Guarded by Women.* Pack has also written a critical study of Wallace Stevens, and co-edited the two *New Poets of England and America* anthologies. He is Associate in Poetry at Barnard College.

Donald Petersen *(Liedchen)* has helped edit *The Western Review*, taught at the State University of New York, and been a contributor to numerous little magazines. A first book of his poetry, *The Spectral Boy*, will be published soon by Wesleyan.

Adrienne Rich *(Thirty-Three)* lives in Cambridge, Mass., has children and last year published her third book of poems, *Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law.* (Earlier titles: *A Change of World, The Diamond Cutters.*) Lately she has been translating some contemporary poems from the Dutch, a sample of which will shortly appear in *The Paris Review.*

Louis Simpson *(Lines Written Near San Francisco)* has lately published his fourth book of poems, *At the End of the Open Road* (Wesleyan). It succeeds *The Arrivistes, Good News of Death, A Dream of Governors*; and a novel, *Riverside Drive.* Mr. Simpson lately spent a year on a Guggenheim fellowship, living on Riverside Drive.

Charles Tomlinson *(Idyll)* is the author of *Seeing Is Believing*; his second collection, *A Peopled Landscape*, has lately been published by Oxford. Recently he has been living in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and spent last summer on a ranch once inhabited by D. H. Lawrence.

James Wright *(Heritage)* is most recently the author of *The Bough Will Not Break* (Wesleyan). His earlier collections were *A Green Wall* and *Saint Judas.* With Robert Bly he recently published a joint collection, *The Lion's Tail and Eyes*, and a selection of translations from Trakl. He is teaching at the University of Minnesota.

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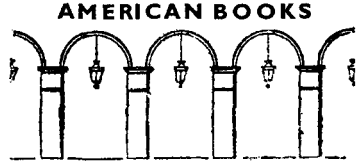

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